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# ENGLISH LITERATURE

## AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD

BY

RICHARD GARNETT, C.B., LL.D.

AND

EDMUND GOSSE, M.A., LL.D.

VOL. IV

This One

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LORD BYRON.

After the Portrait by T. Phillips in the possession of John Murray Esq^R.

# ENGLISH LITERATURE

## AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD

IN EIGHT VOLUMES

VOLUME IV — PART I

## FROM THE AGE OF JOHNSON TO THE AGE OF TENNYSON

BY

EDMUND GOSSE

HON. M.A. OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE
HON. LL.D. OF ST. ANDREWS UNIVERSITY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, AS A CHILD
FROM A MINIATURE IN THE POSSESSION OF JOHN MURRAY

New York
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# PREFACE TO THE FOURTH VOLUME

THE principles of selection which were followed in the earlier volumes of this work have been adhered to in this also, except in the last chapter, where it was found necessary in some degree to modify them. The age through which we have just passed is still too close to us to enable us to decide with any confidence which, among the many names which were prominent in the second rank of its literature, will continue to interest posterity. Instead, therefore, of crowding the page with eminent names, certain leading figures have been taken as unquestionably in themselves attractive, and as probably representative of the time. This portion of the work, it is obvious, must be peculiarly liable, in future editions, to extension and alteration. At present, its limit is the death of Queen Victoria, and it deals with no living person, except with one famous and venerable philosopher, whose work, we must regretfully suppose, is finished.

So far as the illustration of this volume is concerned, we descend through grades of picturesque decline to the period, not merely of the frock-coat and of the top-hat, but of that most inæsthetic instrument, the photographer's lens. We may claim, perhaps, to make up in copiousness for a lack of beauty which is no fault of ours. Among those whose kindness and generosity have enabled us to enrich this volume, my particular thanks are due to Mr. William Archer, to Mr. Arthur Christopher Benson, to Mr. Ernest H. Coleridge, to Mr. Coningsby D'Israeli, to Mr. Warwick Draper, to Mrs. John Richard Green, to Miss Gaskell, to Mr. John Murray, to Mrs. Richmond Ritchie, to Mr. Clement Shorter, to Mr. M. H. Spielmann, to Mrs. Baird Smith, to Messrs. Smith, Elder and Co., and to Mr. Butler Wood of Bradford. As before, I have to thank my friend Mr. A. H. Bullen for his kindness in reading the proofs and Mrs. Sydney Pawling for her valuable help in obtaining matter for illustration.

E. G.

*November* 1903.

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# ENGLISH LITERATURE

## AN ILLUSTRATED RECORD

# CHAPTER I

## THE AGE OF WORDSWORTH

## 1780–1815

THE period which immediately preceded and accompanied the French Revolution was one of violent and complete transition in English literature. The long frost of classicism broke up; the sealed fountains of romantic expression forced their way forth, and then travelled smoothly on upon their melodious courses. The act of release, then, is the predominant interest to us in a general survey, and the progress of liberated romance the main object of our study. Poetry once more becomes the centre of critical attention, and proves the most important branch of literature cultivated in England. The solitary figure of Burke attracts towards the condition of prose an observation otherwise riveted upon the singularly numerous and varied forms in which poetry is suddenly transforming itself. As had been the case two hundred years before, verse came abruptly to the front in England, and absorbed all public attention.

**George III.**

*After the Portrait by Allan Ramsay*

Among the factors which led to the enfranchisement of the imagination, several date from the third quarter of the eighteenth century. Johnson's famous and diverting *Lives of the Poets* was raised as a bulwark against forces which that sagacious critic had long felt to be advancing, and which he was determined to withstand. The Aristotelian rules, the monotony of versification, the insistence on abstract ideas and conventional verbiage—the whole panoply of classicism under which poetry had gone forth to battle in serried ranks since 1660 was now beginning to be discredited. The Gallic code was found insufficient, for Gray had broken up the verse; Collins had introduced a plaintive, flute-like note; Thomson had looked straight at nature; then the

timid protest had given scandal, while Churchill and Goldsmith had gone back to the precise tradition. But 1760-70 produced a second and stronger effort in revolt, founded on archaistic research. Antiquaries had gone dimly searching after the sources of Middle English, and Chatterton had forged the Rowley poems; Warton had glorified Spenser, and Percy had edited his inspiring *Reliques*. Most of all, the pent-up spirit of lyricism, that instinct for untrammelled song which the eighteenth century had kept so closely caged, had been stimulated to an eager beating of its wings by the mysterious deliverances of the pseudo-Ossian.

*The Revival of Nature.*

On the whole, this last, although now so tarnished and visibly so spurious, seems to have been at that time the most powerful of all the influences which made for the revival of romanticism in England. Thousands of readers, accustomed to nothing more stimulating than Young and Blair, reading the Desolation of Balclutha and Ossian's Address to the Sun with rapture, found a new hunger for song awakened in their hearts, and felt their pulses tingling with mystery and melody. They did not ask themselves too closely what the rhapsody was all about, nor quibble at the poorness of the ideas and the limited range of the images. What Gessner gave and Rousseau, what the dying century longed for in that subdued hysteria which was presently to break forth in political violence, was produced to excess by the vibrations of those shadowy harp-strings which unseen fingers plucked above the Caledonian graves of Fingal and Malvina. *Ossian* had nothing of position and solid value to present to Europe; but it washed away the old order of expression, and it prepared a clear field for Goethe, Wordsworth, and Chateaubriand.

**Cowper's Mother**

*From an Engraving by Finden*

But in the meantime, four poets of widely various talent arrest our attention during the last years of the century. Of these, two, Cowper and Crabbe, endeavoured to support the old tradition; Burns and Blake were entirely indifferent to it—such, at least, is the impression which their work produces on us, whatever may have been their private wish or conviction. Certain dates are of value in emphasising the practically simultaneous appearance of these poets of the transition. Cowper's *Table Talk* was published in 1782, and the *Task* in 1785. Crabbe's clearly defined first period opens with the *Candidate* of 1780, and closes with the *Newspaper* of 1785. Blake's *Poetical*

*Sketches* date from 1783, and the *Songs of Innocence* from 1787. If the world in general is acquainted with a single bibliographical fact, it is aware that the Kilmarnock Burns was issued in 1786. Here, then, is a solid body of poetry evidently marked out for the notice of the historian, a definite group of verse inviting his inspection and his classification. Unfortunately, attractive and interesting as each of these poets is, it is exceedingly difficult to persuade ourselves that they form anything like a school, or are proceeding in approximately the same direction. If a writer less like Crabbe than Burns is to be found in literature, it is surely Blake, and a parallel between Cowper and Burns would reduce a critic to despair.

At first sight we simply see the following general phenomena. Here is WILLIAM COWPER, a writer of great elegance and amenity, the soul of gentle wit and urbane grace, engaged in continuing and extending the work of Thomson, advancing the exact observation of natural objects, without passion, without energy, without a trace of lyrical effusion, yet distinguished from his eighteenth century predecessors by a resistance to their affected, rhetorical diction; a very pure, limpid, tender talent, all light without fire or vapour.

*William Cowper.*

**William Cowper**

*After the Picture by Sir Thomas Lawrence*

**William Cowper** (1731–1800) was the son of the Rev. John Cowper and his wife Ann Donne, of good family on both sides. His father was chaplain to George II. and rector of Great Berkhampstead, where the poet was born on the 15th of November 1731. He was a very delicate child, much neglected at home after his mother's death in 1737, when he was sent for two years to a school in Market Street, Herts, where his nervous strength was permanently undermined by the bullying of one of his school-fellows. His eyes became painfully inflamed, and for two years (1739-41) he was under medical care in the house of an oculist. About the age of ten he grew stronger, and was able to be sent to Westminster School, where he played cricket and football, and, under the celebrated Latinist, Vincent Bourne, became a competent scholar. Among his friends and associates at school were Churchill, Colman, Cumberland, and Warren Hastings. Cowper remained at Westminster until 1749, when he was entered

of the Middle Temple, and articled for three years to a solicitor. During this time he was intimate with the family of his uncle, Ashley Cowper, with whose daughters, Harriet and Theodora, he was to be found "from morning to night, giggling and making giggle." This was well enough, but when in 1752 he went to reside alone in the Temple, solitude made him morbid, and his old melancholy returned, in a religious form. He was called to the Bar in June 1754. The very proper refusal of Ashley Cowper to allow an engagement between the first cousins, William and Theodora, could not fail to render the life of the poet miserable; but this impossible courtship should have been nipped in its earlier stages. At the death of his father, in 1756, Cowper bought chambers in the Middle Temple, and began to contribute to current literature. He says that he "produced several half-penny ballads, two or three of which had the honour to become popular," but these have never been identified. A variety of causes, however, of which the dread of poverty was one, exasperated his neurosis, and in October 1763, just after his appointment to be Clerk of the Journals of the House of Lords, he became suicidally insane; on the 7th of December he was placed in an asylum at St. Albans, kept by a minor poet of some grace and an excellent physician, Dr. Nathaniel Cotton. His terrible *Sapphics* were written during this confinement. In the summer of 1765 he was considered to be so far cured that he was removed to lodgings in Huntingdon. Here he renewed his correspondence with a charming cousin, Lady Hesketh, and made some pleasant acquaintances, in particular that of a cultivated family of Unwins, into whose house he was taken as a paying guest later in the same year. In 1767 the elder Mr. Unwin was thrown from his horse, the children were dispersed, and it became natural for Mrs. Unwin and Cowper to take house together. Accordingly in September they removed to Orchard Side in Olney in Bucks. Here Cowper was greatly impressed by the character and conversation of the curate, John Newton, who persuaded the poet to help him in his parochial duties: Olney was a poor parish, without gentry, "and the poor poet was the only squire." Newton, however, had no sense of moderation; a young man of fiery

**Cowper's Birthplace at Berkhamsted**

**Weston Lodge**

*From a Drawing by John Greig*

I have taken, since you went, many of the walks which we have taken together, and some of them I believe, without thoughts of you. I have, though not a good memory in general, yet a good local memory, and can recollect by the help of a tree or a stile, what you said on that particular spot. For this reason I purpose, when the Summer is come, to walk with a book in my pocket. What I read at my fireside I forget, but what I read under a hedge or at the side of a pond, that pond and that hedge will always bring to my remembrance; and this is a sort of Memoria technica which I would recommend to you, did I not know that you have no occasion for it

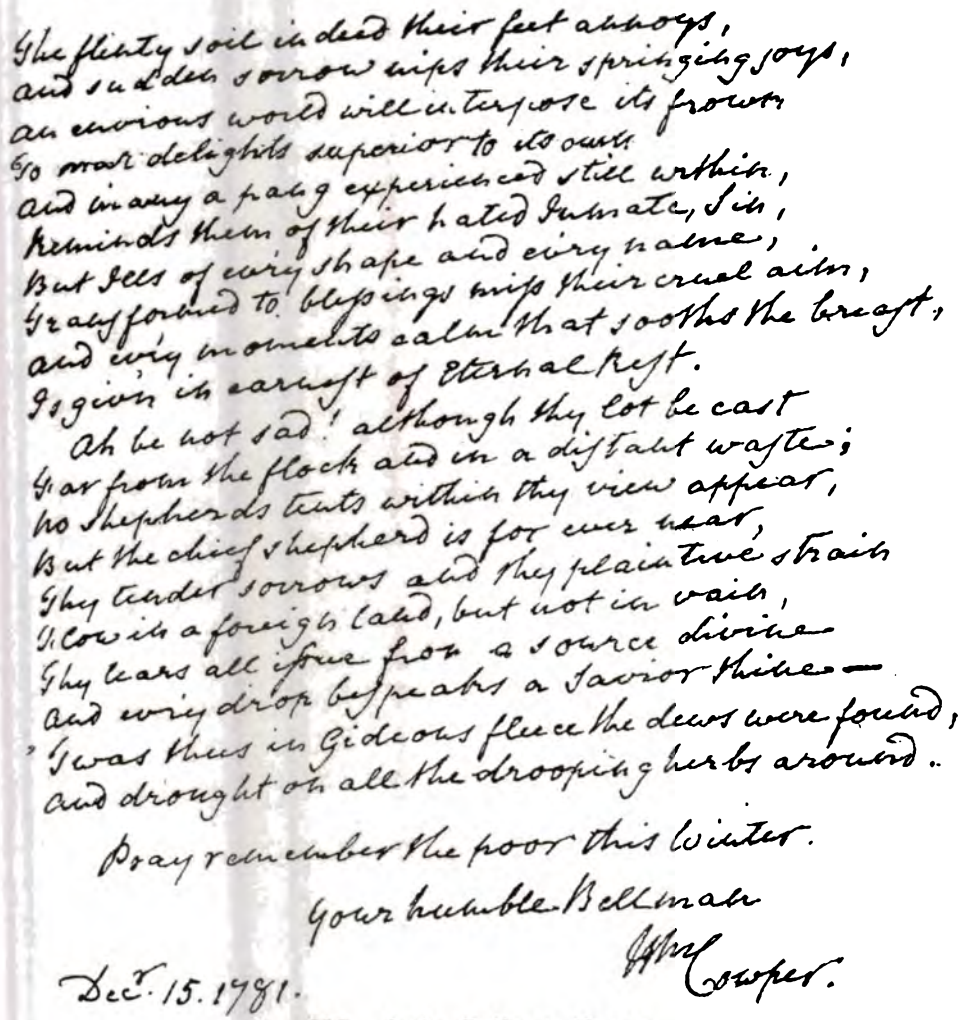


From a letter of Cowper's

strength and zeal himself, he had no pity upon his friend's nervous weakness, and under the strain of violent religious excitement Cowper went mad again. But before this Newton had persuaded Cowper to join him in the composition of the hymns which were first collected eight years later. In 1772 Cowper and Mrs. Unwin had determined to marry, but an outbreak of suicidal mania was the signal for an obscuration of his intellect for sixteen months, during all which time Mrs. Unwin nursed him with untiring devotion. It was found that nothing amused him so much as looking after animals, and his friends collected quite a menagerie round him at Old Orchard, and in particular the three classic hares. In 1779 the *Olney Hymns* were published, and with recovering mental serenity a new bloom seems to come over the intellect of Cowper, and he wrote, for the first time, with ease and fluency. There was little to be said in favour of an anonymous satire in verse, *Antithelyphthora*, but he was now, as he approached his fiftieth year, about to become a poet. His first volume of *Poems*, indeed, including *Table Talk* and many of his best shorter pieces, was not published until 1782. *John Gilpin* followed anonymously in 1783. By this time Lady Austen, a vivacious and cultivated widow, had made her appearance in Olney, and at her persuasion Cowper now began to write a poem "upon a sofa": it turned into *The Task*, which was published in 1785. But, meanwhile, Cowper had been painfully forced to choose between an old friend and a new one; he renounced Lady Austen, and Mrs. Unwin regained her supremacy. *The Task* placed its author, with a bound, at the head of the poets of the age; it introduced many new friends to him, and it placed him in communication once more with his cousin, Lady Hesketh. She now became the most trusted of his correspondents, and, encouraged by her sympathy, Cowper began to translate Homer. His "dearest coz," Lady Hesketh, visited him in the summer of 1786, and with infinite delicacy helped him and Mrs. Unwin in the way of money, for they were now again threatened with poverty. It was at her instigation that they left Olney, and took a house at Weston-Underwood. Here the fanatic harshness of Newton and grief at the sudden death of William Unwin, his friend's son, brought on a fresh attack of insanity. Delayed by illness and melancholy, it was not until 1791 that the *Homer* saw the light. Cowper began to write once more with ardour, but the decline of Mrs. Unwin's faculties, ending in paralysis, clouded his intelligence again. He fought a losing battle against insanity, but for the

**Cowper in his Study, with his favourite hare**
*From a Drawing by Richard Westall*

remainder of his life he was practically a lunatic. In 1795 he was moved to Dunham Lodge,[1] near Swaffham, and then into the town of East Dereham, where Mrs. Unwin died on the 17th of December 1796. Cowper lived on, with occasionally gleams of sanity, his occasional translations, done during these last days, showing no failure of


The plenty toil in dread their feet annoys,
And sudden sorrow wipes their springing joys,
An envious world will interpose its frowns
To mar delights superior to its own.
And in any a pang experienced still within,
Reminds them of their hated Intimate, Sin,
But Sin of every shape and every name,
Gratefully forbid to blessings wins their cruel aim,
And every moments calm that soothes the breast,
Is given in earnest of Eternal Rest.
Ah be not sad! although thy Lot be cast
Far from the flock and in a distant waste;
No Shepherds tents within thy view appear,
But the chief Shepherd is for ever near,
Thy tender sorrows and they plaintive strain
Tho' in a foreign land, but not in vain,
Thy tears all issue from a source divine
And every drop bespeaks a Savior thine —
'Twas thus in Gideons fleece the dews were found,
And drought on all the drooping herbs around.

Pray remember the poor this Winter.

Your humble Bellman

John Cowper.

Dec.r 15. 1781.

**MS. of the Bellman Verses**
*Preserved in the British Museum*

power, until the 25th of April 1800. He was buried in Dereham Church, "named softly, as the household name of one whom God hath taken." His incomparably witty, tender, and graceful *Letters* were published, with his life, by Hayley in 1803.

THE POPLAR FIELD.

The poplars are fell'd ; farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade !
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

[1] Erroneously called *Dereham* Lodge in the *Dictionary of National Biography*.

WILLIAM COWPER.

AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY GEORGE ROMNEY

Twelve years have elapsed since I last took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew ;
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade !

The blackbird has fled to another retreat,
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat.
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast, and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

**Cowper's House at Weston**

*From a Drawing by J. D. Harding*

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man ;
Though his life be a dream, his enjoyments, I see,
Have a being less durable even than he.

FROM "THE TASK": BOOK IV.

Hark ! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright !—
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks ;
News from all nations lumbering at his back.

True to his charge, the close-pack'd load behind,
Yet, careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destined inn,
And, having dropp'd the expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful : messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some ;
To him indifferent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,
Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears, that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charged with amorous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.

**Cowper's Summer House**

*From a Drawing by J. D. Harding*

But O the important budget ! usher'd in
With such heart-shaking music, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awak'd?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
Snore to the murmurs of the Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plumed
And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace?
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logic, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all :
I burn to set the imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utterance once again.
Now stir the fire and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,
That cheer, but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful evening in.

### To Mrs. Unwin.

[*May* 1793.]

Mary! I want a lyre with other strings,
  Such aid from heaven as some have feigned they drew,
  An eloquence scarce given to mortals, new
And undebased by praise of meaner things,
That, ere through age or woe I shed my wings,
  I may record thy worth with honour due,
  In verse as musical as thou art true,
And that immortalises whom it sings.
But thou hast little need. There is a book
  By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
  A chronicle of actions just and bright;
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine,
And, since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

**View of Olney**

*From a Drawing by J. D. Harding*

### The Colubriad.

Close by the threshold of a door nail'd fast
Three kittens sat; each kitten look'd aghast;
I passing swift and inattentive by,
At the three kittens cast a careless eye,
Not much concern'd to know what they did there,
Not deeming kittens worth a poet's care.
But presently a loud and furious hiss
Caused me to stop, and to exclaim, "What's this?"
When lo! upon the threshold met my view,
With head erect and eyes of fiery hue,
A viper, long as Count de Grasse's queue.
Forth from his head his forked tongue he throws,
Darting it full against a kitten's nose,
Who having never seen in field or house
The like, sat still and silent as a mouse;
Only projecting with attention due.
Her whisker'd face, she ask'd him, "Who are you?"

On to the hall went I, with pace not slow.
But swift as lightning, for a long Dutch hoe,
With which, well-arm'd, I hasten'd to the spot,
To find the viper,—but I found him not.
And, turning up the leaves and shrubs around,
Found only—that he was not to be found.
But still the kittens, sitting as before,
Sat watching close the bottom of the door.
"I hope," said I, "the villain I would kill
Has slipp'd between the door and the door-sill;
And if I make despatch and follow hard,
No doubt but I shall find him in the yard:"
For long ere now it should have been rehearsed,
'Twas in the garden that I found him first.
Even there I found him, there the full-grown cat
His head, with velvet paw, did gently pat,
As curious as the kittens erst had been
To learn what this phenomenon might mean.
Fill'd with heroic ardour at the sight,
And fearing every moment he would bite,
And rob our household of our only cat
That was of age to combat with a rat,
With outstretch'd hoe I slew him at the door,
And taught him NEVER TO COME THERE NO MORE.

*George Crabbe.*

Then, here is GEORGE CRABBE, whom Byron would have done better to call "Dryden in worsted stockings," a dense, rough, strongly vitalised narrator, without a touch of revolt against the conventions of form, going back, indeed—across Goldsmith and Pope—to the precise prosody used by Dryden at the close of his life for telling tragical stories; a writer absolutely retrogressive, as it at first seems, rejecting all suggestion of change, and completely satisfied with the old media for his peculiar impressions, which are often vehement, often sinister, sometimes very prosaic and dull, but generally sincere and direct—Crabbe, a great, solid talent, without grace, or flexibility, or sensitiveness.

**The Birthplace of Crabbe**
*From a Drawing by C. Stanfield*

**George Crabbe** (1754–1832) was the son of the salt-master, or collector of salt-dues, at Aldeborough, in Suffolk, where he was born on Christmas Eve, 1754. His

childhood was one of pinching poverty, but his father, whose ambition exceeded his means, contrived to send him to fairly good schools at Bungay and at Stowmarket. He was apprenticed at the age of fourteen as errand-boy to a doctor near Bury St. Edmunds, and at seventeen to a surgeon at Woodbridge. In 1774 he published the rhymed anonymous satire called *Inebriety*. He studied medicine, and set up in practice in Aldeborough, but the profession was so distasteful to him, and his success in it so improbable, that in his twenty-fifth year he abandoned it, and came up to London with a capital of £3 to try his fortune in literature. His poem, *The Candidate*, was published anonymously in 1780, but brought with it neither fame nor money. Reduced to absolute distress, the young poet wrote, without an introduction, to Edmund Burke, who saw him, took a fancy to him, and generously befriended him. Under the genial patronage of Burke, who introduced him to Reynolds, Thurlow, and Fox, Crabbe published anonymously *The Library* in 1781, and, with his name, what is one of his best productions, *The Village*, in 1783. By Burke's advice, Crabbe qualified himself for holy orders, and returned to Aldeborough as curate: in 1782 he was ordained priest, and appointed chaplain to the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir. His troubles were now over, and still through the goodness of Burke, he became a pluralist after the fashion of his time, exchanging two poor livings in Dorsetshire for two of greater value in the Vale of Belvoir. When the Duke of Rutland died in 1788, the duchess presented him with two rectories in Leicestershire. Crabbe had by this time abandoned poetry, his latest publication of note having been *The Newspaper*, 1785. Lord Thurlow had told him that he was as like Parson Adams as twelve to a dozen. He carried out the parallel: he married and settled down as a comfortable country clergyman, without any ambition, and it was more than twenty years before the world heard of him again. Meanwhile he had added to his clerical incumbencies, and in 1796 he had taken a mansion in Suffolk, Great Glenham Hall. Here he lived for nearly ten years, and then returned to one of his incumbencies, Muston, where he had not lived since 1792, in consequence of a warning from his bishop that he had grown too lax about parochial residence. The general awakening

**Rev. George Crabbe**

*After the Portrait by T. Phillips*

of a public interest in poetry seems to have roused Crabbe in his seclusion. In 1807 he published the *Poems*, which he had written during his long retirement; they pleased, and in the same year Crabbe was encouraged to bring out a long poem, *The Parish Register*, parts of which had already been seen and admired by Fox. We are told that these passages were the last specimens of literature which "engaged and amused the capacious, the candid, the benevolent mind of this great man." The success of *The Parish Register* was beyond all probable expectation, and Crabbe found himself suddenly famous at the age of fifty-three. He published *The Borough*, perhaps the best of his compositions, in 1810; *Tales in Verse* in 1812; and finally, in 1819, *Tales of the Hall*. During these years he had the gratification of seeing himself habitually named among the first poets of the age. When the sale of his works had already flagged a little, he was still able to dispose of his entire copyright for £3000, a sum which, according to an amusing story of Moore's, he characteristically carried loose in notes in his waistcoat-pocket from London to Trowbridge in Wiltshire, of which parish he had been the rector since 1814. His celebrity, his genial simplicity, and the gentleness of his humour made Crabbe a very general favourite, and entertaining stories of his unworldly manners were commonly current. He was now widely invited to great houses, and enjoyed his fame, but never quite woke up from his bewilderment at finding himself a fashionable genius. Walter Scott esteemed and liked Crabbe, and had often urged him to come and stay with him in Edinburgh. He was, nevertheless, a little disconcerted to see the Suffolk poet quietly arrive, unannounced, in the very midst of the celebration of George IV.'s visit in August 1822, and take a dignified part in the proceedings. Crabbe, already an elderly man, was to live nearly ten years more. He died at Trowbridge on the 3rd of February 1832, having published nothing since the *Tales of the Hall*. His works and letters were given to the world in 1834 by his son, George Crabbe the younger.

**Rev. George Crabbe**

*From an original Drawing*

FANNY'S DREAM.

They feel the calm delight, and thus proceed
Through the green lane,—then linger in the mead,—
Stray o'er the heath in all its purple bloom,—
And pluck the blossom where the wild bees hum ;
Then through the broomy bound with ease they pass,
And press the sandy sheep-walk's slender grass,
Where dwarfish flowers among the gorse are spread,
And the lamb browses by the linnet's bed ;
Then 'cross the bounding brook they make their way
O'er its rough bridge—and there behold the bay !—
The ocean smiling to the fervid sun—
The waves that faintly fall and slowly run—

**Parham Hall, Suffolk (the Moat House of Crabbe)**

*From a Water-colour Drawing by Clarkson Stanfield*

The ships at distance and the boats at hand ;
And now they walk upon the seaside sand,
Counting the number and what kind they be,
Ships softly sinking in the sleepy sea :
Now arm in arm, now parted, they behold
The glitt'ring waters on the shingles roll'd :
The timid girls, half dreading their design,
Dip the small foot in the retarded brine,
And search for crimson weeds, which spreading flow,
Or lie like pictures on the sand below ;
With all those bright red pebbles, that the sun
Through the small waves so softly shines upon ;
And those live lucid jellies which the eye
Delights to trace as they swim glittering by :
Pearl-shells and rubied star-fish they admire,
And will arrange above the parlour-fire,—

Tokens of bliss !—" Oh ! horrible ! a wave
Roars as it rises—save me, Edward ! save !"
She cries ;—Alas ! the watchman on his way
Calls, and lets in—truth, terror, and the day !

DWELLINGS OF THE POOR.

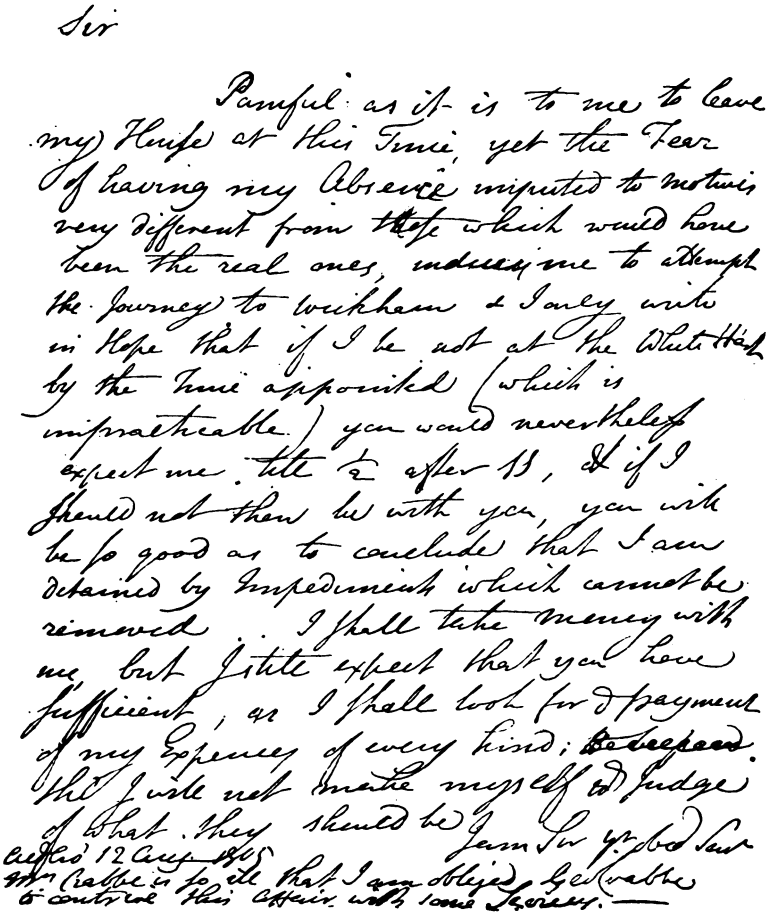
All our poor to know,
Let's seek the winding Lane, the narrow Row,
Suburban prospects, where the traveller stops
To see the sloping tenement on props,
With building yards immix'd, and humble sheds and shops ;
Where the Cross-keys and Plumbers' Arms invite
Laborious men to taste their coarse delight ;

**Aldborough Town Hall**

*From a Drawing by C. Stanfield*

Where the low porches, stretching from the door,
Gave some distinction in the days of yore,
Yet now neglected, more offend the eye,
By gloom and ruin, than the cottage by :
Places like these the noblest town endures,
The gayest palace has its sinks and sewers.
  Here is no pavement, no inviting shop,
To give us shelter when compell'd to stop ;
But plashy puddles stand along the way,
Fill'd by the rain of one tempestuous day ;
And these so closely to the buildings run,
That you must ford them, for you cannot shun ;
Though here and there convenient bricks are laid,
And door-side heaps afford their dubious aid.
  Lo ! yonder shed ; observe its garden-ground,
With the low paling, form'd of wreck, around :
There dwells a fisher ; if you view his boat,
With bed and barrel—'tis his house afloat ;
Look at his house, where ropes, nets, blocks, abound,
Tar, pitch, and oakum—'tis his boat aground :

That space inclosed, but little he regards,
Spread o'er with relics of masts, sails, and yards:
Fish by the wall, on spit of elder, rest,
Of all his food, the cheapest and the best,
By his own labour caught, for his own hunger dress'd.



Facsimile Letter from Crabbe

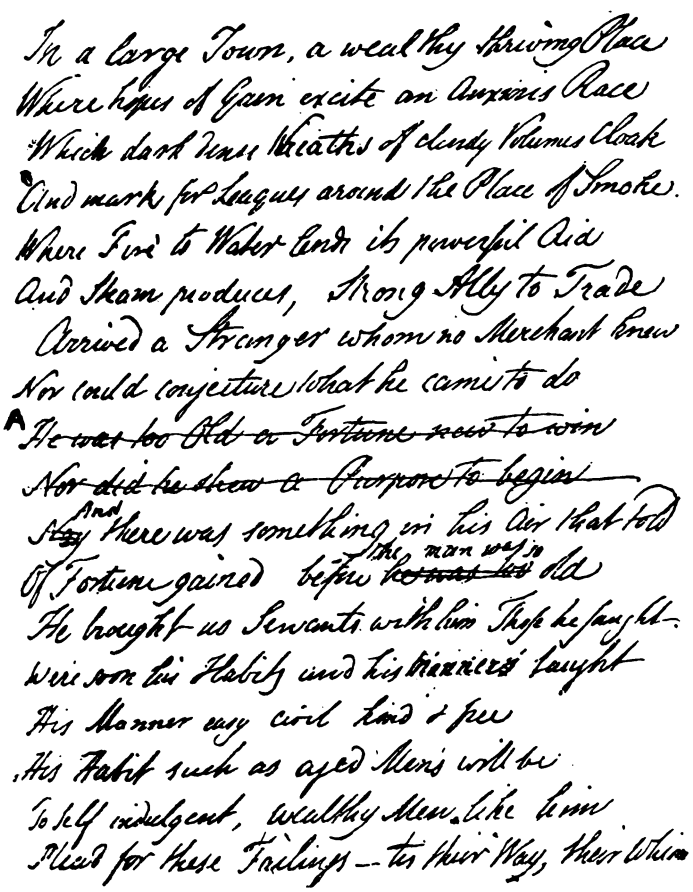
## THE WIDOW.

FROM "TALES OF THE HALL."

Now came the time, when in her husband's face
Care, and concern, and caution she could trace;
His troubled features gloom and sadness bore,
Less he resisted, but he suffer'd more;
Grief and confusion seized him in the day,
And the night passed in agony away.
"My ruin comes!" was his awakening thought,
And vainly through the day was comfort sought;
"There, take my all!" he said, and in his dream,
Heard the door bolted, and his children scream.

Fretful herself, he of his wife in vain
For comfort sought—"He would be well again;
Time would disorders of such nature heal—
O! if he felt what she was doom'd to feel!

## The Family of Friends.



Beginning of the MS. of Crabbe's "Family of Friends"

Such sleepless nights! such broken rest! her frame
Rack'd with diseases that she could not name!
With pangs like her's no other was oppress'd!"
Weeping, she said, and sigh'd herself to rest.

The suffering husband look'd the world around,
And saw no friend; on him misfortune frown'd;

Him self-reproach tormented ; sorely tried,
By threats he mourn'd, and by disease he died.

As weak as wailing infancy or age,
How could the widow with the world engage?

"Her debts would overwhelm her, that was sure!"
But one privation would she not endure ;
"We shall want bread! the thing is past a doubt."
"Then part with Cousins!" "Can I do without?"
"Dismiss your servants." "Spare me them, I pray!"
"At least your carriage!" "What will people say?"
"That useless boat, that Folly on the lake!"
"Oh! but what cry and scandal it will make."
For ever begging all to be sincere,
And never willing any truth to hear.

"It was so hard on her, who not a thing
Had done such mischief on their heads to bring;
This was her comfort, this she would declare,"—
And then slept soundly in her pillow'd chair.

*William Blake.*

Then here is WILLIAM BLAKE, for whom the classic forms and traditions have nothing to say at all; whose ethereal imagination and mystic mind have taken their deepest impressions from the Elizabethan dramatists and from Ossian; whose aim, fitfully and feverishly accomplished, is to fling the roseate and cerulean fancies of his brain on a gossamer texture woven out of the songs of Shakespeare and the echoes of Fingal's airy hall; a poet this for whom time, and habit, and the conventions of an age do not exist; who is no more nor less at home in 1785 than he would be in 1585 or 1985; on whom his own epoch, with its tastes and limitations, has left no mark whatever; a being all sensitiveness and lyric passion and delicate, aerial mystery.

**William Blake** (1757–1827) was the second son of James Blake, a hosier of Broad Street, Golden Square, where he was born on the 28th of November 1787. He was scarcely educated at all, beyond learning to read and write, but at ten years of age he began to copy prints, and at eleven years to write verses. He became at fourteen apprenticed to Basire, the engraver, and later worked in the schools of the Royal Academy. It is not here to the purpose to follow stage by stage the artistic career of Blake. In 1783 Flaxman the sculptor, in combination with another friend, caused Blake's juvenile poems, *Poetical Sketches*, to pass through the press. This volume, all written before 1777, with much very crude and feeble work, contained some of the poet's most perfect songs. His father died in 1784, and Blake set up next door to the paternal shop as a printseller, in partnership with a fellow-student. This arrangement lasted three years. Blake then started alone in Poland Street, and his first act was to bring out the *Songs of Innocence*, engraved, in a manner invented by the painter-poet, on copper, with a symbolic design in many colours, and finished by hand. The interest awakened by these astonishing productions was small, but Blake was not dejected. In 1789 he engraved *The Book of Thel*, and in 1790, in prose, *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*. In 1791 he published in the usual way the least important of his poetical books, *The French Revolution*. In 1794 the exquisite *Songs*

*of Experience* followed. By this time he had moved again from Poland Street to Lambeth, where he continued to produce his rainbow-coloured rhapsodies. Among these, *The Gates of Paradise*, *The Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, and *America, a Prophecy*, were finished within a few months. *Europe* and *Urizen* also belong to 1794. At this period Blake's apocalyptic splendour of invention was at its height. There was a distinct decline in clearness of intellectual presentment in *The Song of Los* and *Ahania* (both 1795). Blake now turned mainly to painting and picture-engraving. In 1800 he left London for Felpham, near Bognor, to be near Hayley, who wanted Blake's constant services as an engraver. He was greatly delighted with Felpham: "Heaven opens here on all sides her golden gates." Here he lived in peace until 1803, when occurred the very strange incident of his being arrested on a charge of sedition brought against him in revenge by a spiteful sergeant of dragoons. Blake was acquitted at Chichester in 1804, but he was excessively disturbed. "The visions were angry with him," he believed, and he returned to London. From lodgings in South Molton Street he began once more to issue prophetic "poems" of vast size and mysterious import—*Jerusalem* and *Milton*, both engraved in 1804. These he declared to be dictated to him supernaturally, "without premeditation, and even against my will." After this, although he continued to write masses of wild rhythm, *The Ghost of Abel* (1822) was the only literary work which he could be said, by any straining of the term, to "publish." By this time he had moved (1821) to the latest of his tenements, Fountain Court, in the Temple. In 1825 his health began to fail, and he was subject to painful and weakening recurrences of dysentery. He retained the habit of draughtsmanship, however, until a few days before his death on the 12th of August 1827, when he passed away smiling, after an ecstatic vision of Paradise. He had been a seer of luminous wonders from his very infancy, when he had beheld the face of God at a window and had watched shining angels walking amongst the hay-makers. In his early manhood he was habitually visited by the souls of the great dead, "all majestic shadows, grey but luminous, and superior to the common height of man." The question how far Blake believed in the objective actuality of his visions has never been answered: but it is evident that in his trances he did not distinguish or attempt to distinguish between substance and phantom. Blake was, in early life, a robust and courageous little man, active, temperate, and gentle, with extraordinary eyes. Of his unworldliness many tales are told, humorous and pathetic. His faith was like that of a little child, boundless and unreasoning. His wife, Catherine

**William Blake**

*After the Portrait by T. Phillips*

The Lamb
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Gave thee life & bid thee feed.
By the stream & o'er the mead;
Gave thee clothing of delight,
Softest clothing wooly bright;
Gave thee such a tender voice,
Making all the vales rejoice:
Little Lamb who made thee
Dost thou know who made thee
Little Lamb I'll tell thee,
Little Lamb I'll tell thee:
He is called by thy name,
For he calls himself a Lamb:
He is meek & he is mild,
He became a little child:
I a child & thou a lamb,
We are called by his name.
Little Lamb God bless thee.
Little Lamb God bless thee.

A PAGE FROM "SONGS OF INNOCENCE."

*Designed and written by William Blake.*

Dear Cumberland

I have lately had some pricks of Conscience on account of not acknowledging your friendship to me immediately on the receipt of your beautiful book. I have likewise had by me all the Summer 6 Plates which you desired me to get made for you. they have laid on my shelf without speaking to tell me whose they were or that they were there at all & it was some time (after I found them) before I could divine whence they came or whether they were bound or whether they were to lie there to eternity. I have now sent them to you to be transmuted, thou real Alchymist!

Go on Go on. such works as yours Nature & Providence the Eternal Parent demand from their children how few produce them in such perfection how Nature smiles on them. how Providence rewards them. How all your Brethren say, The sound of his harp & his flute heard from his secret forest cheers us to the labours of life & we plow & reap forgetting our labour

Let us hear you sometimes as well as sometimes hear from you & let us often see your Works

Compliments to Mrs Cumberland & Family

Yours in Head & Heart

Sandhill
23 Decemr 1796
a Merry Christmas

Wm Blake

Facsimile Letter from Blake to Richard Cumberland

Sophia Boucher (1761–1831), was ignorant and youthful when he married her, and was trained by him to be the docile partner in his artistic and poetic workmanship, to sit helpfully beside him, as he would have put it, in the onset of "the chariot of genius." His life was one of poverty and obscurity, endured with heroic cheerfulness.

AH! SUNFLOWER.

Ah, Sunflower, weary of time,
Who countest the steps of the sun;
Seeking after that sweet golden clime
Where the traveller's journey is done;

Where the youth, pined away with desire,
And the pale virgin, shrouded in snow,
Arise from their graves and aspire
Where my Sunflower wishes to go!

HOLY THURSDAY.

'Twas on a Holy Thursday, their innocent faces clean,
Came children walking two and two, in red, and blue, and green:
Grey-headed beadles walked before, with wands as white as snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames waters flow.

Oh what a multitude they seemed, these flowers of London town!
Seated in companies they sit, with radiance all their own.
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys and girls raising their innocent hands.

Now like a mighty wind they raise to heaven the voice of song,
Or like harmonious thunderings the seats of heaven among:
Beneath them sit the aged men, wise guardians of the poor.
Then cherish pity, lest you drive an angel from your door.

THE WILD FLOWER'S SONG.

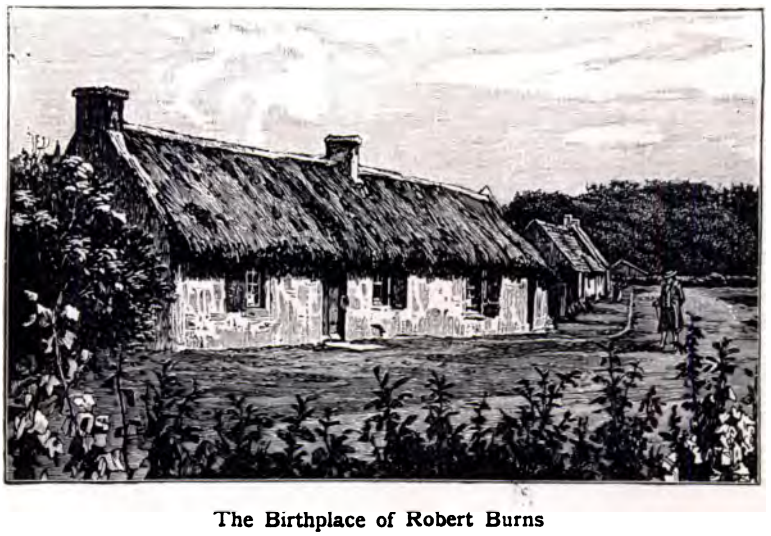
As I wandered in the forest
The green leaves among,
I heard a wild flower
Singing a song—

"I slept in the earth
In the silent night;
I murmured my thoughts
And I felt delight.

"In the morning I went,
As rosy as morn
To seek for new joy,
But I met with scorn."

*Robert Burns.* And finally, here is ROBERT BURNS, the incarnation of natural song, the embodiment of that which is most spontaneous, most ebullient in the lyrical part of nature. With Burns the reserve and quietism of the eighteenth century broke up. There were no longer Jesuit rules of composition, no longer dread of enthusiasm, no longer a rigorous demand that reason or

intellect should take the first place in poetical composition. Intellect, it must be confessed, counts for little in this amazing poetry, where instinct claims the whole being, and yields only to the imagination. After more than a century of sober, thoughtful writers, Burns appears, a song-intoxicated man, exclusively inspired by emotion and the stir of the blood. He cannot tell why he is moved. He uses the old conventional language to describe the new miracle of his sensations. "I never hear," he says, "the loud, solitary whistle of the curlew in a summer noon, or the wild mixing cadence of a troop of grey plovers in an autumnal morning, without feeling an elevation of



**The Birthplace of Robert Burns**

soul like the enthusiasm of devotion or poetry." This is the prose of the eighteenth century; but when the same ideas burst forth into metre:—

"The Muse, nae poet ever fand her,
Till by himsel' he learned to wander,
Adown some trotting burn's meander,
And no think lang;
O sweet to stray, and pensive ponder
A heart-felt sang"—

we start to discover that here is something quite novel, a mode of writing unparalleled in its easy buoyant emotion since the days of Elizabeth.

**Robert Burns** (1759-1796), the son of William Burnes or Burness and his wife Agnes Brown, was born in a cottage in the parish of Alloway, in Ayrshire, on the 25th of January 1759. Robert was the eldest of seven children; his father, who had been a gardener, was now a farmer, and "a very poor man." In 1765 Robert went to school in his native village, being, he says, already "a good deal noted for a retentive memory, a stubborn, sturdy *something* in my disposition, and an enthusiastic idiot-piety." He was taught the elements of style in prose and verse by a remarkable youth, John Murdoch, whose highly-strung emotional eagerness unquestionably did much to awaken the boy's

genius for poetry. About 1772 Burns was sent to a parish school at Dalrymple, all the time cultivating an extraordinarily avid and general taste for such masterpieces of literature as fell in his way. William Burness, however, was now farming a place called Mount Oliphant, close to Alloway, a piece of "the poorest land in Ayrshire," and Robert must leave his books to work in the fields. The boy's life combined "the cheerless gloom of a hermit with the unceasing toil of a galley-slave." This picture darkened in 1775, when the family fell into the hands of a factor, but brightened again in 1777, when William Burness moved to a better farm, Lochlea, in the parish of Tarbolton. Here the Burnesses enjoyed four comfortable years, and here the joyous temperament of Robert began to assert itself. He was now writing verses with the greatest activity, and beginning to prosecute the earliest of his multifarious and celebrated love-affairs. With the design of marriage, indeed, he went in 1781 to Irvine to learn the flax-dressing business; the business of life, too, he was now learning with infinite address, and was in that first stage of his maturity in which, as Mr. Henley puts it, he appears before us "a peasant resolute to be a buck." He went back early in 1782 to Lochlea, to find his father's affairs in confusion. A few months later William Burness died, but before this event Robert and the ablest of his brothers, Gilbert, had taken another farm, Mossgiel, at Mauchline. From a financial point of view this enterprise was not lucky; but as a poet Burns was simply made at Mossgiel. Here rose into lush maturity and faded away as quickly his famous passions for Jean Armour and Mary Campbell (the very shadowy "Highland Lassie" of sentiment); these, and others, in their inceptions served as fuel for the lyric fire that now burned impetuously in the heart of Burns, and found vent in some of the most exquisite poetry he ever composed. In July 1786 his *Poems chiefly in the Scottish Dialect* was published at Kilmarnock; its success was instant, "old and young, high and low, grave and gay, all were alike delighted, agitated, transported." Ploughboys and maid-servants spent the money, "which they wanted to purchase necessary clothing," on the irresistible volume. The poet, however, made no money by it, for the profits were more than eaten up by the costs of printing a second edition. Breaking from Jean Armour, Burns now proposed to Mary Campbell that he and she should emigrate to Jamaica. He seems to have actually started for Greenock, when Mary Campbell was taken ill and died (October 1786). Burns, with surprising elasticity of temperament, changed all his plans, and determined on a raid upon Edinburgh. He arrived in that capital with conquest in his eye on the 28th of November. His advent was celebrated

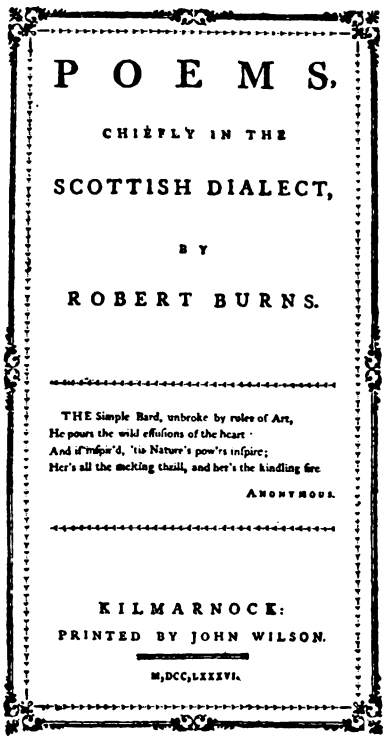
**Mrs. Burns (Jean Armour) and one of her grandchildren**

*After a Picture by S. M'Kenzie*

ROBERT BURNS.

AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY ALEXANDER NASMYTH

with a blare of trumpets; the strong, fresh countryman, "looking like a farmer dressed to dine with the laird," was at once the rage, and sported every night with earls and duchesses. Burns bore his triumph outwardly with "a sort of dignified plainness and simplicity" which did him much credit; inwardly it inflicted an irreparable hurt upon his temperament. No man of his years, least of all the ardent Rab of Mossgiel, could yield to "such solicitations and allurements to convivial enjoyment" as were now forced upon the fashionable poet without being ultimately the worse for them. His poems



POEMS,

CHIEFLY IN THE

SCOTTISH DIALECT,

BY

ROBERT BURNS.

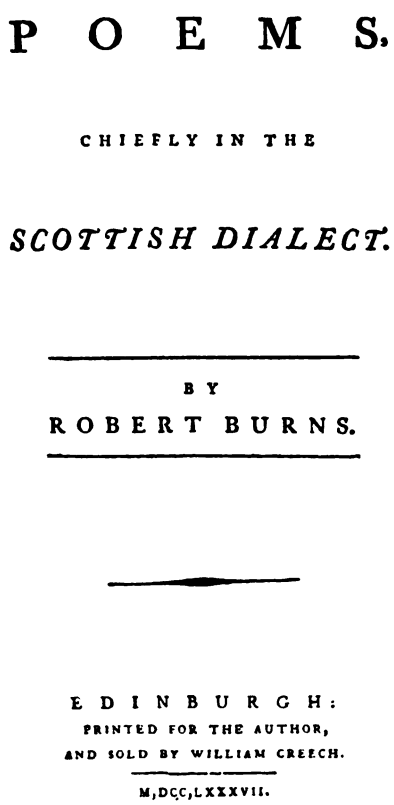
THE Simple Bard, unbroke by rules of Art,
He pours the wild effusions of the heart:
And if inspir'd, 'tis Nature's pow'rs inspire;
Her's all the melting thrill, and her's the kindling fire.

ANONYMOUS.

KILMARNOCK:
PRINTED BY JOHN WILSON.

M,DCC,LXXXVI.

**Title-page of First, or Kilmarnock Edition, of Burns's Poems**



POEMS,

CHIEFLY IN THE

*SCOTTISH DIALECT.*

BY

ROBERT BURNS.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,
AND SOLD BY WILLIAM CREECH.

M,DCC,LXXXVII.

**Title-page of the Edinburgh Edition of Burns's Poems**

were reprinted with additions in Edinburgh in April 1787; this time Burns received something substantial, perhaps £500, but he very foolishly sold the copyright for another £100, and his publisher was a tardy paymaster. At last, in June 1787, Burns was back at Mossgiel for a month, and then he started, by Edinburgh, for his famous tour in the Highlands with Nicol, a neighbour. Two very important friendships with women of the educated class are now to be noted, that with Mrs. Dunlop (1786-95) and that with Mrs. "Clarinda" M'Lehose (1787-91); these were both, in their ways, excellent ladies, to the first of whom the poet was like a son, and to the second like a sort of amatory china shepherd. To the animalism which mainly pursued the adventures of Burns, the sentimental affection of these two correspondents offers a contrast at which we may smile, but which was full of benefit to his better nature. Burns cultivated

their friendship "with the enthusiasm of religion," and in the vocabulary of the younger lady he was always aptly termed "Sylvander." Far less sentimental were Burns's relations with the agreeable females of Mauchline, and early in 1788 Jean Armour, who had forgiven him only too easily for past negligence, was turned by her parents out of house and home, and forced on the poet's protection. Presently—we do not quite know when or how—he married her privately, and in August publicly; in order to break with the past, Burns took charge at the same time of the farmstead of Ellisland in Dumfriesshire (which, however, never belonged to him), and thither, or at first to a house near by, his wife and he removed in November. Here for some time his life flowed on, after all its mad excitements, in a calm current of farm-work and occasional song-writing; and in some attention to the place as a gauger which Glencairn had secured for him in 1787. In August 1789 Burns was appointed Exciseman for the ten parishes of Dumfriesshire which surround Ellisland. It is not quite plain why the exercise of riding hither and thither over the moors of Nithsdale did not suit the poet's health, but almost immediately he began to age rapidly and to be a chronic sufferer from disease. But it is doubtful whether we have the gauging to blame for any part of this; although Burns was but thirty years of age, his constitution was undermined by the fierce zest with which he had drained the bowl of life, greedily, rashly, with lips sucking at the brim. To be colloquial, he had pre-eminently "eaten his cake," and he took no warning —what there was left of it he was eating still. He never cared for Ellisland, or to till another man's acres; he was therefore little disappointed when that charge came to an end. It was thought best that Burns should give up farming and come up to Dumfries, a more convenient centre than Ellisland for his excursions on behalf of the Excise. Accordingly, in December 1791, his wife and he settled in a town house in the Mill Vennel. He was now not writing much poetry, although in 1789 he had printed anonymously *The Prayer of Holy Willie*, in 1790 had indited the immortal *Tam o' Shanter*, and ever since 1787 and until his death was contributing songs, some original and some adapted, to "The Scots Musical Museum." Of the last years of Burns's life there is little to record that is agreeable. It was by the worst of mischances that he was led to settle in a little county-town where there was everything to tempt his weaknesses and nothing to stimulate his genius. His discontent found voice in a very unwise championship of the principles of the French Revolution; these Jacobin sentiments alienated him still further from those whose companionship might have been useful to him. He grew moody and hypochondriacal. He forgot that life had ever

**Robert Burns**

*After the Portrait by Skirving*

been fire in his veins; he wrote, "I have only known existence by the pressure of sickness and counted time by the repercussions of pain." Yet, as late as 1794, he could write the *Address to the Deil*, and his songs were tuneable to the very last. But he drank himself into degradation; the vitality in him was "burned to a cinder." His last days were darkened with the fear of being sent to gaol for debt. On the 21st of July 1796 this great poet and delightful man was released from a world in which he had no longer any place for happiness. The personal appearance of Burns in his prime was manly and attractive, without much refinement of feature, but glowing with health and the ardour of the instincts. Sir Walter Scott, who, when a boy of fifteen, saw Burns—"*Virgilium vidi tantum*"—has preserved a very fine description of him. "His person was robust, his manners rustic, not clownish. There was a strong expression of shrewdness in his lineaments; the eye alone indicated the poetic character and temperament. It was large and of a dark cast, and literally glowed when he spoke with feeling or interest. I never saw such another eye in a human head," not even in that of Byron. His manners to women were exceeding insinuating; the Duchess of Gordon remarked that "his address to females was always deferential, and always with a turn to the pathetic or humorous, which engaged their attention particularly." Both these tributes date from 1786, when the powers and graces of Burns were at their fullest expansion, and had not begun to decay.

**Mrs. Dunlop**

*After a Portrait by J. Irvine*

FROM "TAM O' SHANTER."

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattlin' showers rose on the blast:
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd;
That night a child might understand,
The deil had business on his hand.

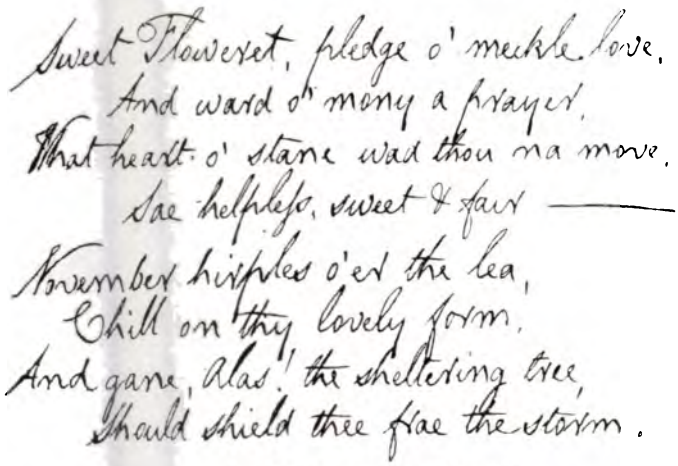
Weel mounted on his grey mare, Meg—
A better never lifted leg—
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;
Whiles holding fast his guid blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glow'ring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;

Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry—

By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd ;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Whare drucken Charlie brak's neck-bane ;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn ;

**Alloway Kirk**

And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare Mungo's mither hang'd hersel—
Before him Doon pours all his floods ;
The doubling storm roars through the woods ;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole ;
Near and more near the thunders roll ;
When glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze ;
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing,
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.



Sweet Floweret, pledge o' meikle love,
And ward o' mony a prayer,
What heart o' stane wad thou na move,
Sae helpless, sweet & fair ——
November hirples o'er the lea,
Chill on thy lovely form,
And gane, alas! the sheltering tree,
Should shield thee frae the storm.

**Fragment of a MS. Poem by Robert Burns**

FROM "ADDRESS TO THE DEIL."

O thou ! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie,
Wha in yon cavern grim and sootie,
Closed under hatches,
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,
To scaud poor wretches !

Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodies be :
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a deil,
To skelp an' scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeel !

Great is thy pow'r, an' great thy fame ;
Far ken'd and noted is thy name ;
An' tho' yon lowin' heugh's thy hame,
Thou travels far ;
An' faith ! thou's neither lag nor lame,
Nor blate nor scaur.

Whiles, ranging like a roarin' lion,
For prey, a' holes and corners tryin' ;
Whyles on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin',
Tirlin' the kirks ;
Whyles, in the human bosom pryin',
Unseen thou lurks.

I've heard my reverend grannie say,
In lanely glens you like to stray ;
Or where auld ruin'd castles gray
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way,
Wi' eldritch croon.

When twilight did my grannie summon,
To say her prayers, douce, honest woman !
Aft yont the dyke she's heard you bummin',
Wi' eerie drone ;
Or, rustlin', thro' the boortries comin',
Wi' heavy groan.

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
The stars shot down wi' sklentin' light,
Wi' you, mysel', I gat a fright,
Ayont the lough ;
Ye, like a rash-bush stood in sight,
Wi' waving sough.

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,
When wi' an eldritch stour, quaick—quaick—
Amang the springs,
Awa ye squatter'd like a drake,
On whistling wings.

### Whistle and I'll Come to You, My Lad.

Oh whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad,
Oh whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad ;
Tho' father and mither and a' should gae mad,
Oh whistle, and I'll come to you, my lad.

But warily tent, when ye come to court me,
And come na unless the back-yett be a-jee ;
Syne up the back stile, and let naebody see,
And come as ye were na comin' to me.
And come, &c.
Oh whistle, &c.

At kirk, or at market, whene'er ye meet me,
Gang by me as tho' that ye cared nae a flie ;
But steal me a blink o' your bonnie black e'e,
Yet look as ye were na lookin' at me.
Yet look, &c.
Oh whistle, &c.

Aye vow and protest that ye care na for me,
And whiles ye may lightly my beauty a wee ;
But court nae anither, tho' jokin' ye be,
For fear that she wile your fancy frae me.
For fear, &c.
Oh whistle, &c.

**House at Dumfries where Burns Died**

### A Red, Red Rose.

O my love's like a red, red rose,
That's newly sprung in June :
O my love's like the melody
That's sweetly played in tune.
As fair art thou, my bonnie lass,
So deep in love am I ;
And I will love thee still, my dear,
'Till a' the seas gang dry.

'Till a' the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi' the sun,
I will love thee still, my dear,
While the sands o' life shall run.
And fare thee weel, my only love !
And fare thee weel a while !
And I will come again, my love,
Though it were ten thousand mile.

Your book is, I hear, on the road to reach me. As to
printing of Poetry, when you prepare it for the Press, you
have only to spell it right, & place the capital letters pro-
perly as to the punctuation, the Printers do that
themselves. —
I have a copy of "Tam of Shanter ready to send you
by the first opportunity: it is too heavy to send by Post
I heard of M.r Corbet lately. — He, in consequence of your
recommendation, is most zealous to serve me — Pleas
favor me soon with an account of your good folks; if M.rs
Henri is recovering, & the young gentleman doing well
I am ever, my dear Friend & honored Patroness,
yours sincerely Robt. BURNS

**Extract from Letter from Burns to Mrs. Dunlop**

JOHN ANDERSON, MY JO.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
When we were first acquent,
Your locks were like the raven,
Your bonnie brow was brent;
But now your brow is beld, John,
Your locks are like the snaw;
But blessings on your frosty pow,
John Anderson, my jo.

John Anderson, my jo, John,
We clamb the hill thegither;
And many a canty day, John,
We've had wi' ane anither.
Now we maun totter down, John,
But hand in hand we'll go:
And sleep thegither at the foot,
John Anderson, my jo.

**Greyfriars' Churchyard**
*From a Drawing by W. H. Bartlett*

We have spoken of Burns as he comes to us in the sequence of the great poets of Britain. In Scottish poetry he takes a somewhat different place. Here he seems not one in a chain, but the supreme artist to whom all others are merely subsidiary. Scotch Doric verse appears to us like a single growth, starting from the rich foliage of Dunbar and his compeers, *Scotch Doric Verse.*

up the slender stem of Alexander Scott, of Sempills, of Montgomery, of Allan Ramsay, of the song-writers of the eighteenth century, swelling into the fine opening bud of Fergusson, only to break into the single aloe-blossom of the perfect Burns. All local Scottish verse, from the early sixteenth century until to-day, presupposes Burns; it all expands towards him or dwindles from him. If his works were entirely to disappear, we could re-create some idea of his genius from the light that led to it and from the light that withdraws from it. This absolute supremacy of Burns, to perfect whose amazing art the Scottish race seemed to suppress and to despoil itself, is a very remarkable phenomenon. Burns is not merely the national poet of Scotland; he is, in a certain sense, the country itself: all elements of Scotch life and manners, all peculiarities of Scotch temperament and conviction, are found embroidered somewhere or other on Burns's variegated singing-robes.

**Dr. Blacklock**
*After an original Portrait*

*The Poets of the Eighties.*

It is obvious that these four great poets of the eighties are not merely "great" in very various degree, but are singularly unlike one another. Cowper so literary, Crabbe so conventional, Blake so transcendental, Burns so spontaneous and passionate—there seems no sort of relation between them. The first two look backward resolutely, the third resolutely upward, the fourth broadly stretches himself on the impartial bosom of nature, careless of all rules and conventions. It appears impossible to bring them into line, to discover a direction in which all four can be seen to move together. But in reality there is to be discovered in each of them a protest against rhetoric which was to be the keynote of revolt, the protest already being made by Goethe and Wieland, and so soon to be echoed by Alfieri and André Chenier. There was in each of the four British poets, who illuminated this darkest period just before the dawn, the determination to be natural and

**Mrs. Thomson (Jessie Lewers)**
*After a Portrait by J. Irvine*

Mauchline 13th Nov. 1788

Madam

I had the very great pleasure of dining at Dunlop yesterday. — Men are said to flatter women because they are weak, if it is so, Poets must be weaker still; for Misses Rachel & Keith ~~Keith~~ Miss Georgina M^c^kay, with their flattering attentions & artful compliments, absolutely turned my head. — I own they did not lard me over as a Poet does his Patron or still more his Patroness, nor did they sugar me up as a Cameronian Preacher does J. J. & C... ft; but they so intoxicated me with their sly insinuations & delicate innuendoes of Compliment that if it had not been for a lucky recollection how much additional weight & lustre your good opinion & friendship must give me in that circle, I had certainly looked on myself as a person of no small consequence — I dare not say one word how much I was charmed with the Major's friendly welcome, elegant manner & acute remarks, lest I should be thought to balance my

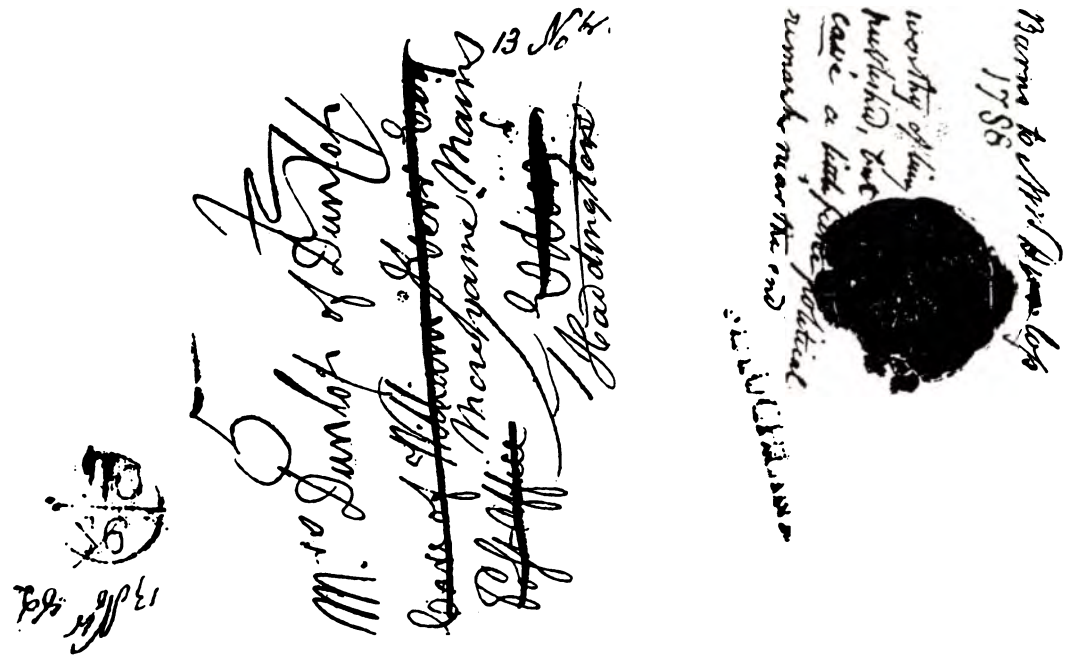
ornamental ornaments of applause over against the finest Quey
in Ayrshire which he made me a present of to help
& adorn my farm-stock. — As it was on Hallowda.
I am determined annually as that day returns to
decorate her horns with an Ode of gratitude to the
family of Dunlop. —
The Songs in the 2d Vol. of the Museum, marked, D.
are D.r Blacklock's; but as I am sorry to say they
are far short of his other works, I, who only kn
the cyphers of them all, shall never let it be know
Those marked, T, are the work of an obscure, tin
kling, but extraordinary body of the name of
Tytler: a mortal, who though he drudges about Edi
as a common Printer, with leaky shoes, a shy-lighted
hat, & knee-buckles as unlike as George-by-the-grace-
of-God, & Solomon-the-son-of-David, yet that same
unknown drunken Mortal is author & compiler o
three fourths of Elliot's pompous Encyclopedia Br
tanica. — Those marked, Z, I have given to the world
as old verses to their respective tunes; but in fact,

of a good many of them, little more than the Grounds ancient; tho' there is no reason for telling every body this piece of intelligence. — Next letter I write you, I shall send one or two sets of verses I intend for Johnson's 3d Volume. —

What you mention of the thanksgiving day is inspiration from above. — Is it not remarkable, odiously remarkable, that tho' manners are more civilized, & the rights of mankind better understood, by an Augustan Century's improvement, yet in this very reign of heavenly Hanoverianism, & almost in this very year, an empire beyond the Atlantic has had its Revolution too; & for the very same maladministration & legislative misdemeanors in the illustrious & sapient impotent Family of H — as was complained of in the tyrannical & bloody house of Stuart. " —

So soon as I know of your arrival at Dunlop, I shall take the first conveniency to dedicate a day or perhaps two to Your & Friendship, under the guarantee

of the Major's hospitality. — There will soon be three
score & ten miles of permanent distance between us; & now
that your friendship & friendly correspondence is entwisted with




the heart strings of my enjoyment of life, I must indulge
myself in a festive day of "The feast of reason & the flow of soul."
I have the honor to be Madam, your grateful humble serv.t
Robt Burns

sincere. It was this that gave Cowper his directness and his delicacy; it was this which stamps with the harsh mark of truth the sombre vignettes of Crabbe, just as truly as it gave voluptuous ecstasy to the songs of Blake, and to the strong, homely verse of Burns its potent charm and mastery.

It was reality that was rising to drive back into oblivion the demons of conventionality, of "regular diction," of the proprieties and machinery of composition, of all the worn-out bogies with which poetical old women frightened the baby talents of the end of the eighteenth century. Not all was done, even by these admirable men: in Burns himself we constantly hear the verbiage grating and grinding on; in his slow movements Crabbe is not to be distinguished from his predecessors of a hundred years; Cowper is for ever showing qualities of grace and elegant amenity which tempt us to call him, not a forerunner of the nineteenth, but the finest example of the eighteenth-century type. Yet the revolt against rhetorical convention is uppermost, and that it is which is really the characteristic common feature of this singularly dissimilar quartette; and when the least inspired, the least revolutionary of the four takes us along the dismal coast that his childhood knew so well, and bids us mark how

> "Here on its wiry stem, in rigid bloom,
> Grows the salt lavender that lacks perfume;
> Here the dwarf sallows creep, the septfoil harsh,
> And the soft, shiny mallow of the marsh,"

we observe that the reign of empty verbiage is over, and that the poets who shall for the future wish to bring concrete ideas before us will do so in sincere and exact language. That position once regained, the revival of imaginative writing is but a question of time and of opportunity.

A very singular circumstance was the brevity of duration of this school of the eighties, if school it can be called. Burns was unknown until 1786, and in 1796 he died. Cowper's original productions, so far as they were not posthumous, were presented to the world in 1782 and 1785, and for nine years before his death in 1800 he had been removed from human intercourse. Blake remained as completely invisible as any one of his own elemental angels, and his successive collections can scarcely be said to have done more than exist, since even those which were not, like the Prophetic Books, distributed in a species of manuscript were practically unobserved. Crabbe had a very curious literary history: his career was divided into two distinct portions, the one extending from 1780 to 1785, the other continued from 1807; from his thirty-first to his fifty-third year Crabbe was obstinately silent. We may say, therefore, that the transitional period in English poetry, hanging unattached between the classical and the romantic age, lasted from 1780 to 1786. During these seven years a great deal of admirable verse was brought before the observation of English readers, who had to make the best they could of it until the real romantic school began in 1798. In Cowper, Crabbe, Burns, and Blake, we look in vain for any exotic influence of any importance. Cowper was

a good scholar and translated Homer, but Greek poetry left no mark on his style; the others were innocent of ancient learning, and they were united in this also, that they are exclusively, almost provincially, British.

*Minor Poets.*

Meanwhile, the old classical tradition did not perceive itself to be undermined. If criticism touched these poets at all—Blake evaded it, by Burns it was bewildered—it judged them complacently by the old canons. They did not possess, in the eyes of contemporaries, anything of the supreme isolation which we now award to them. The age saw them accompanied by a crowd of bards of the old class, marshalled under the laureateship of Whitehead, and of these several had an air of importance. Among these minnows, ERASMUS DARWIN was a triton who threw his preposterous scientific visions into verse of metallic brilliance, and succeeded in finishing what Dryden had begun. But with this partial and academic exception, everything that was written, except in the form of satire, between 1780 and 1798, in the old manner, merely went further to prove the absolute decadence and wretchedness to which the classical school of British poetry was reduced.

**Erasmus Darwin**

*After the Portrait by Joseph Wright of Derby*

**Erasmus Darwin** (1731–1802), was born at Elston Hall, in Nottinghamshire, on the 12th of December 1731. He was educated at Chesterfield School, and proceeded to St. John's, Cambridge, in 1750. He studied medicine at Edinburgh, and settled as a physician in Lichfield towards the close of 1756. Here he became a useful and prominent man, gradually extending his reputation as a philanthropist as well as a doctor. Darwin built himself a villa just outside Lichfield, with fountains and a grotto, and here he carried on the botanical studies of his middle life. Here, also, he turned to the composition of poetry, but for a long time in secret, lest it should damage his practice. He was nearly fifty years of age before he ventured to publish, anonymously, his earliest work, *The Loves of the Plants* (1789). Some years before this he had married a wealthy widow, Mrs. Chandos-Pole, and had moved to her estate, Redbourne Hall, near Derby. He afterwards moved into Derby itself, and finally to Breadsall Priory. In 1792 he published *The Economy of Vegetation*, which, with *The Loves of the Plants*, formed the poem since called *The Botanic Garden*. Darwin now turned to prose and produced several theoretical treatises, in particular, *Zoonomia* (1794) and *Phytologia* (1800); he also wrote a very curious work on *Female Education in Boarding Schools* (1797). A final poem *The*

*Temple of Nature*, was posthumous (1803). Erasmus Darwin died at Breadsall on the 18th of April 1802, and a highly entertaining life of him—one of the curiosities of biographical literature—was published soon afterwards by another Lichfield poet, Anna Seward (1747–1809), who seems to have wished to revenge the *spretæ injuria formæ*. Darwin was the centre of a curious provincial society of amiable pedants and blue stockings, to all of whom he was vastly superior in intellect and character. He was an amateur in philosophy, in verse a tasteless rhetorician, but he was a man of very remarkable force of personal character, amiable, vigorous, and eccentric. It is never to be forgotten that he was the worthy grandfather of a far more eminent contributor to human knowledge, Charles Darwin.

FROM "THE BOTANIC GARDEN."

And now, Philanthropy, thy beams divine
Dart round the globe from Zembla to the Line ;
O'er each dark prison plays the cheering light,
As northern lustres o'er the vault of night ;
From realm to realm, by cross or crescent crown'd,
Where'er mankind and misery are found,
O'er burning sands, deep waves, or wilds of snow,
Thy Howard, journeying, seeks the house of woe ;
Down many a winding step to dungeons dank,
Where anguish wails, and galling fetters clank ;
To caves bestrew'd with many a mouldering bone,
And cells, whose echoes only learn to groan ;
Where no kind bars a whispering friend disclose,
No sunbeam enters, and no zephyr blows,
He treads inemulous of fame or wealth,
Profuse of toil, and prodigal of health ;
With soft persuasive eloquence expands
Power's rigid heart, and opes his clenching hands ;
Leads stern-ey'd Justice to the dark domains,
If not to sever, to relax the chains ;
Or guides awaken'd Mercy through the gloom,
And shows the prison sister to the tomb ;
Gives to her babes the self-devoted wife,
To her fond husband liberty and life !

The spirits of the good, who bend from high,
Wide o'er these earthly scenes, their partial eye,
When first, arrayed in Virtue's purest robe,
They saw her Howard traversing the globe ;
Saw round his brow, the sun-bright glory blaze
In arrowy circles of unwearied rays,
Mistook a mortal for an angel guest,
And asked what seraph-foot the earth imprest.
Onward he moves, Disease and Death retire,
And murmuring Demons hate him, and admire.

It was a happy instinct to turn once more to foreign forms of poetic utterance, and a certain credit attaches to those who now began to cultivate the sonnet. Two slender collections, the one by THOMAS RUSSELL, and the other by WILLIAM LISLE BOWLES, both of which appeared in 1789, exhibited

the results of the study of Petrarch. Of these two men, Russell, who died prematurely in 1788, was the better as well as the more promising poet; his *Philoctetes in Lemnos* is doubtless the finest English sonnet of the century. But he attracted little notice; while Bowles was fortunate enough to extend a powerful and, to say the truth, an unaccountable spell over Coleridge, who doubtless brought to the mild quatorzains of Bowles much more than he found there. Russell was the first English imitator of the budding romantic poetry of Germany. It is necessary to mention here the pre-Wordsworthian, or, more properly, pre-Byronic, publications of Samuel Rogers—the *Poems* of 1786, the accomplished and mellifluous *Pleasures of Memory* of 1792, the *Epistle to a Friend* of 1798. These were written in a style, or in a neutral tint of all safe styles mingled, that elegantly recalls the easier parts of Goldsmith. Here, too, there was some faint infusion of Italian influence. But truly the early Rogers survives so completely on traditional sufferance that it is not needful to say more about it here; a much later Rogers will demand a word a little further on.

William Lisle Bowles

Of the two clergymen who divide the credit of having re-introduced the sonnet into general practice in England, the **Rev. William Lisle Bowles** (1762–1850), was born at King's Sutton, where his father was vicar. He went to Winchester, where Dr. Joseph Warton (1722–1800), himself a graceful poet, was head-master, and gave a literary character to the school. Bowles proceeded to Trinity College, Oxford, in 1781. In 1789 he published a pamphlet of *Fourteen Sonnets*, which "delighted and inspired" the youthful S. T. Coleridge, and which were widely read and admired. Bowles rose in the Church, and became in 1828 a canon residentiary of Salisbury Cathedral. In 1806 an edition of Pope, which he brought out, engaged him in a lively public controversy with Byron. Bowles died at Salisbury in April 1850. The career of the **Rev. Thomas Russell** (1762–1788) began in close parallelism with that of Bowles, but was soon cut short. Russell was the son of an attorney at Beaminster. He also went to Winchester, and came under the influence of Joseph Warton. He was a precocious and excellent scholar, and, proceeding to Oxford, was elected a Fellow of New College in his nineteenth year. He made a special study of the modern continental literatures of his time. He was attacked by phthisis, and rapidly succumbed to it, dying at Bristol Hot Wells on the 31st of July 1788. Russell published nothing in his life-time, but his posthumous *Sonnets* were collected in 1789, the same year as Bowles's appeared; some miscellaneous lyrics were appended to the little volume. Russell's great sonnet on Philoctetes has been universally admired.

SONNET.

(*Supposed to be written at Lemnos.*)

On this lone Isle, whose rugged rocks affright
The cautious Pilot, ten revolving years
Great Pæan's son, unwonted erst to tears,
Wept o'er his wound: alike each rolling light
Of heaven he watch'd, and blam'd its lingering flight;
By day the sea-mew screaming round his cave
Drove slumber from his eyes, the chiding wave
And savage howlings chas'd his dreams by night.
Hope still was his: in each low breeze, that sigh'd
Thro' his rude grot, he heard a coming oar,
In each white cloud a coming sail he spied;
Nor seldom listen'd to the fancied roar
Of Oeta's torrents, or the hoarser tide
That parts fam'd Trachis from th' Euboic shore.

*Wordsworth and Coleridge.*

But an event was now preparing of an importance in the history of English literature so momentous that all else appears insignificant by its side. In June 1797 a young Cambridge man named SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE, who was devoted to poetry, paid a visit to another young Cambridge man named WILLIAM WORDSWORTH, who was then settled with his sister Dorothy near Crewkerne, in Dorset. The Wordsworths had been deeply concerned in poetical experiment, and William showed to his guest a fragment which he had lately composed in blank verse; we may read it now as the opening of the first book of the *Excursion*. Coleridge was overwhelmed; he pronounced the poem "superior to anything in our language which in any way resembled it," and he threw in his lot unreservedly with Wordsworth. The brother and sister were then just in the act to move to a house called Alfoxden, in West Somerset, where they settled in July 1797. Coleridge was then living at Nether Stowey, close by, a spur of the Quantocks and two romantic coombes lying between them. On these delicious hills, in sight of the yellow Bristol Channel, English poetry was born again during the autumn months of 1797, in the endless walks and talks of the three enthusiasts—three, since Dorothy Wordsworth, though she wrote not, was a sharer, if not an originator, in all their audacities and inspirations.

**William Wordsworth**

*After the Portrait by Robert Hancock*

Wordsworth and Coleridge had each published collections of verses, containing some numbers of a certain merit, founded on the best descriptive masters of the eighteenth century. But what they had hitherto given to the public appeared to them mere dross by the glow of their new illumina-

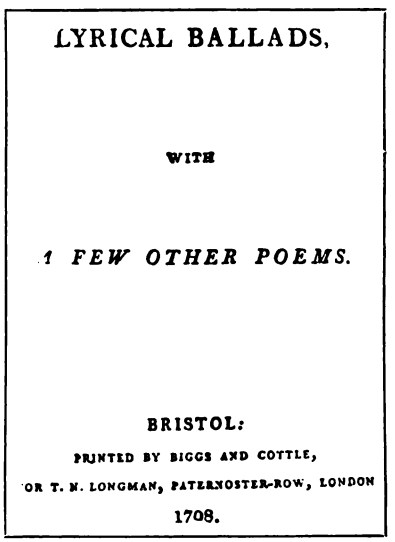
tion. Dorothy Wordsworth appears to have long been drawn towards the minute and sensitive study of natural phenomena; William Wordsworth already divined his philosophy of landscape; Coleridge was thus early an impassioned and imaginative metaphysician. They now distributed their gifts to one another, and kindled in each a hotter fire of impulse. A year went by, and the enthusiasts of the Quantocks published, in September 1798, the little volume of *Lyrical Ballads* which put forth in modest form the results of their combined lucubrations. Mrs. S. T. Coleridge, who was not admitted to the meditations of the poetic three, gaily announced that "the *Lyrical Ballads* are not liked at all by any," and this was, rather crudely put, the general first opinion of the public. It is proper that we should remind ourselves what this epoch-making volume contained.

**Cottage at Nether Stowey occupied by S. T. Coleridge, 1797–1800**

It was anonymous, and nothing indicated the authorship, although the advertisements might reveal that Southey, Lamb, Lloyd, and Coleridge himself were of the confraternity to which its author or authors belonged. The contributions of Wordsworth were nineteen, of Coleridge only four; but among these last, one, the *Rime of the Ancyent Marinere*, was of preponderating length and value, "professedly written," so the preface said, "in imitation of the *style* as well as of the spirit of the elder poets." This very wonderful poem, Coleridge's acknowledged masterpiece, had been composed in November 1797, and finished, so Dorothy records, on "a beautiful evening, very starry, the hornèd moon shining." A little later *Christabel* was begun, and, in "a lonely farmhouse between Porlock and Lynton" (probably early in 1798), *Kubla Khan*. Neither of these, however, nor the magnificent *Ode to France*, nor *Fears in Solitude*, make their appearance in the *Lyrical Ballads* of 1798. In this volume Wordsworth is predominant, and his contributions exemplify two of his chief aims in poetical revolution. He desired to destroy the pompous artificiality of verse-diction and to lower the scale of subjects deemed worthy of poetical treatment; in this he was but partly judicious, and such experiments as "Anecdote for Fathers" and the "Idiot Boy" gave scoffers an occasion to blaspheme. But Wordsworth also designed to introduce into verse an impassioned consideration of natural scenes and objects as a reflection of the complex life of man, and in this he effected a splendid revolution. To match such a lyric as the "Tables Turn'd" it was necessary to return to the age of Milton, and in the "Lines written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey,"

Wordsworth somewhat shyly slipped in at the end of the volume a statement of his literary creed, and an example of the new manner of writing so noble, so full, and so momentous, that it has never been excelled, even by himself.

Thus, in a little russet volume published at Bristol, and anonymously put forth by two struggling lads of extreme social obscurity, the old order of things literary was finally and completely changed. The romantic school began, the classic school disappeared, in the autumn of 1798. It would be a great error, of course, to suppose that this revolution was patent to the world: the incomparable originality and value of "Tintern Abbey" was noted, as is believed, by one solitary reader; the little book passed as a collection of irregular and somewhat mediocre verse, written by two eccentric young men suspected of political disaffection. But the change was made, nevertheless; the marvellous verses were circulated, and everywhere they created disciples. So stupendous was the importance of the verse written on the Quantocks in 1797 and 1798, that if Wordsworth and Coleridge had died at the close of the latter year we should indeed have lost a great deal of valuable poetry, especially of Wordsworth's; but the direction taken by literature would scarcely have been modified in the slightest degree. The association of these intensely brilliant and inflammatory minds at what we call the psychological moment, produced full-blown and perfect the exquisite new flower of romantic poetry.


LYRICAL BALLADS,

WITH

A FEW OTHER POEMS.

BRISTOL:

PRINTED BY BIGGS AND COTTLE,

FOR T. N. LONGMAN, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON

1798.

**Title-page of First Edition of "Lyrical Ballads"**

Burns had introduced "a natural delineation of human passions;" Cowper had rebelled against "the gaudiness and inane phraseology" of the eighteenth century in its decay; Crabbe had felt that "the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society is adapted to the purposes of poetic pleasure." These phrases, from the original preface of 1798, did not clearly enough define the objects of Wordsworth and Coleridge. To the enlarged second edition, therefore, of 1800, the former prefixed a more careful and lucid statement of their distinguishing principles. This preface, extending to nearly fifty pages, is the earliest of those disquisitions on the art of verse which would give Wordsworth high rank among critics if the lustre of his prose were not lost in the blaze of his poetry.

During these last two years of the century the absolute necessity for a radical reform of literature had impressed itself upon many minds. Wordsworth found himself the centre of a group of persons, known to him or unknown, who were anxious that "a class of poetry should be produced" on the lines indicated in "Tintern Abbey," and who believed that it would

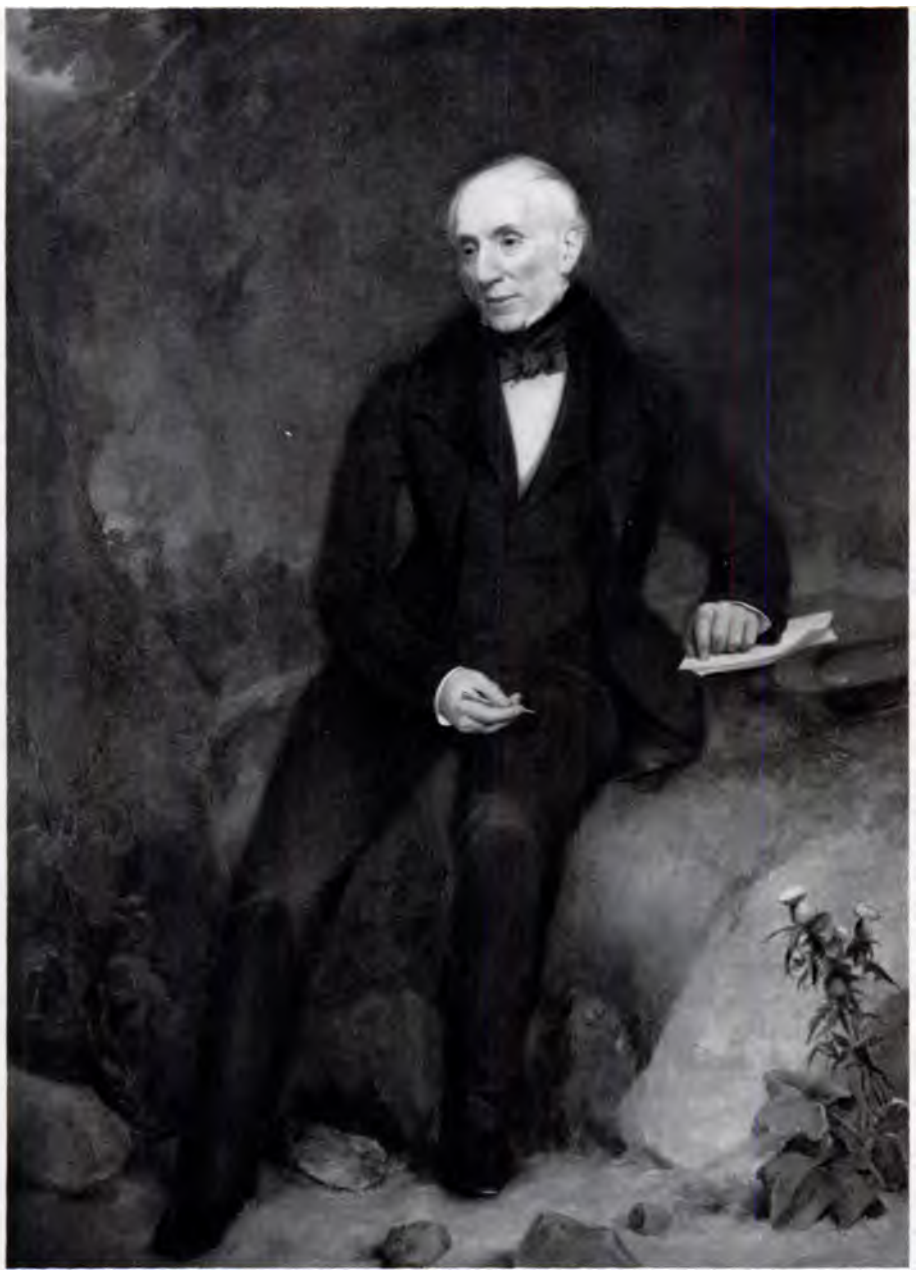
be "well adapted to interest mankind permanently," which the poetry of the older school had manifestly ceased to do. It was to these observers, these serious disciples, that the important manifesto of 1800 was addressed. This was no case of genius working without consciousness of its own aim; there was neither self-delusion nor mock-modesty about Wordsworth. He considered his mission to be one of extreme solemnity. He had determined that no "indolence" should "prevent him from endeavouring to ascertain what was his duty," and he was convinced that that duty was called to redeem poetry in England from a state of "depravity," and to start the composition of "poems materially different from those upon which general approbation is [in 1800] at present bestowed." He was determined to build up a new art on precept and example, and this is what he did achieve with astonishing completeness.

S. T. Coleridge

*After the Portrait by Peter Vandyke*

In the neighbourhood of the Quantocks, where he arrived at the very moment that his powers were at their ripest and his genius eager to expand, Wordsworth found himself surrounded by rustic types of a pathetic order, the conditions of whose life were singularly picturesque. He was in the state of transition between the ignorance of youth and that hardness and density of apprehension which invaded his early middle life. His observation was keen and yet still tender and ductile. He was accompanied and stimulated in his investigations by his incomparable sister. To them came Coleridge, swimming in a lunar radiance of sympathy and sentimental passion, casting over the more elementary instincts of the Wordsworths the distinction of his elaborate intellectual experience. Together on the ferny hills, in the deep coombes, by "Kilve's sounding shore," the wonderful trio discussed, conjectured, planned, and from the spindles of their talk there was swiftly spun the magic web of modern romantic poetry. They determined, as Wordsworth says, that "the passions of men should be incorporated with the beautiful and permanent forms of nature." All elements were there—the pathetic peasants, the pure solitudes of hill and wood and sky, the enthusiastic perception of each of these, the moment in the history of the country, the companionship and confraternity which circulate the tongues of fire—and accordingly the process of combination and creation was rapid and conclusive.

There are, perhaps, no two other English poets of anything like the



WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

After the Portrait by Henry W. Pickersgill.

same importance who resemble one another so closely as do Wordsworth and Coleridge at the outset of their career. They were engaged together to a degree which it is difficult for us to estimate to-day, in breaking down the false canons of criticism which rhetorical writers had set up, and in recurring to a proper and beautiful use of common English. In so doing and writing in close companionship, interested in the same phenomena, immersed in the same scenery, it is not extraordinary that the style that each adopted strictly resembled the style of the other. This is especially true of their blank verse, a form which both sedulously cultivated, in which both enshrined some of their most characteristic thoughts, and in which both were equally engaged in destroying that wooden uniformity of pause and cadence with which Akenside had corrupted the cold but stately verse of Thomson. Who was to decide by whom the "Nightingale" and by whom the "Night-Piece" of 1798 were written? The accent, the attitude, were almost precisely identical.

Yet distinctions there were, and as we become familiar with the two poets these predominate more and more over the superficial likeness. Coleridge is conspicuous, to a degree beyond any other writer between Spenser and Rossetti, for a delicate, voluptuous languor, a rich melancholy, and a pitying absorption without vanity in his own conditions and frailties, carried so far that the natural objects of his verse take the qualities of the human Coleridge upon themselves. In Wordsworth we find a purer, loftier note, a species of philosophical severity which is almost stoic, a freshness of atmosphere which contrasts with Coleridge's opaline dream-haze, magnifying and distorting common things. Truth, sometimes pursued to the confines or past the confines of triviality, is Wordsworth's first object, and he never stoops to self-pity, rarely to self-study. Each of these marvellous poets is pre-eminently master of the phrase that charms and intoxicates, the sequence of simple words so perfect that it seems at once inevitable and miraculous. Yet here also a very distinct difference may be defined between the charm of Wordsworth and the magic of Coleridge. The former is held more under the author's control than the latter, and is less impulsive. It owes its impressiveness to a species of lofty candour which kindles at the discovery of some beautiful truth not seen before, and gives the full intensity of passion to its expression. The latter is a sort of Æolian harp (such as that with which he enlivened the street of Nether Stowey) over which the winds of emotion play, leaving the instrument often without a sound or with none but broken murmurs, yet sometimes dashing from its chords a melody, vague and transitory indeed, but of a most unearthly sweetness. Wordsworth was not a great metrist; he essayed comparatively few and easy forms, and succeeded best when he was at his simplest. Coleridge, on the other hand, was an innovator; his *Christabel* revolutionised English prosody and opened the door to a thousand experiments; in *Kubla Khan* and in some of the lyrics, Coleridge attained a splendour of verbal melody which places him near the summit of the English Parnassus.

In an historical survey such as the present, it is necessary to insist on the fact that although Coleridge survived until 1834, and Wordsworth until 1850, the work which produced the revolution in poetic art was done before the close of 1800. It was done, so far as we can see, spontaneously. But in that year the Wordsworths and their friend proceeded to Germany, for the stated purpose of acquainting themselves with what the Teutonic world was achieving in literature. In Hamburg they visited the aged Klopstock, but felt themselves far more cordially drawn towards the work of Bürger and Schiller, in whom they recognised poets of nature, who, like themselves, were fighting the monsters of an old, outworn classicism. Wordsworth was but cautiously interested; he had just spoken scornfully of "sickly and stupid German tragedies." Coleridge, on the other hand, was intoxicated with enthusiasm, and plunged into a detailed study of the history, language, and philosophy of Germany. Bürger, whose *Lenore* (1774) had started European romanticism, was now dead; but Goethe and Schiller were at the height of their genius. The last-mentioned had just produced his *Wallenstein*, and Coleridge translated or paraphrased it in two parts; these form one of the very few versions from any one language into another which may plausibly be held to excel the original. In the younger men, with whom he should have been in more complete harmony—in Tieck, in the young, yet dying Novalis, in the Schlegels—Coleridge at this time took but little interest. The fact is that, tempting as was to himself and Wordsworth then, and to us now, the idea of linking the German to the English revival, it was not very easy to contrive. The movements were parallel, not correlated; the wind of revolt, passing over European poetry, struck Scandinavia and Germany first, then England, then Italy and France, but each in a manner which forced it to be independent of the rest.

**S. T. Coleridge**

*From a Drawing by J. Kayser in the possession of E. H. Coleridge, Esq.*

For the next fifteen years poetry may be said to have been stationary in England. It was not, for that reason, sluggish or unprolific; on the contrary, it was extremely active. But its activity took the form of the gradual acceptance of the new romantic ideas, the slow expulsion of the old classic taste, and the multiplication of examples of what had once for all been supremely accomplished in the hollows of the Quantocks. The career of the founders of the school during these years of settlement and acceptation may be briefly given. At the very close of 1799 Wordsworth went back to his own Cumbrian county, and for the next half-century he resided, practically without intermission, beside the little lakes which he has made so famous—Grasmere and Rydal. Here, after marrying in 1802, he lived in great simplicity and dignity, gradually becoming the centre of a distinguished company of admirers. From 1799 to 1805 he was at work on the *Prelude*, a didactic poem in which he elaborated his system of natural religion; and he began at Grasmere to use the sonnet with a persistent mastery and with a freedom such as it had not known since the days of Milton. In 1814 the publication of the *Excursion* made a great sensation, at first not wholly favourable, and gave to the service of Wordsworth some of the pleasures of martyrdom. In 1815 the poet collected his lyrical writings.

**Rydal Mount, occupied by Wordsworth from 1813 to his death in 1850**

This date, 1814–15, therefore, is critical in the career of Wordsworth. It forced his admirers and detractors alike to consider what was the real nature of the innovation which he had introduced, and to what extreme it could be pushed. In 1815 he once more put forth his views on the art of verse in a brilliant prose essay, which may be regarded as his final, or at least maturest utterance on the subject. At this moment a change came over the aspect of his genius: he was now forty-five years of age, and the freshness of his voice, which had lasted so long, was beginning to fail. He had a brief Virgilian period, when he wrote *Laodamia* and *Dion*, and then the beautiful talent hardened into rhetoric and sing-song. Had Wordsworth passed away in 1815 instead of 1850, English literature had scarcely been the poorer. Of

Coleridge there is even less to be said. His career was a miserable tissue of irregularity, domestic discord, and fatal indulgence in opium. In 1812 he recast his old drama of *Osorio* as *Remorse*, a fine romantic tragedy on Jacobean lines. He was occasionally adding a few lines to the delicious pamphlet of poetry which at length found a publisher in 1817 as *Sibylline Leaves*. Yet even here, all that was really important had been composed before the end of the eighteenth century. Save for one or two pathetic and momentary revivals of lyric power, Coleridge died as a poet before he was thirty.

The name of ROBERT SOUTHEY has scarcely been mentioned yet, although it is customary to connect it indissolubly with those of his great friends. He was slightly younger than they, but more precocious, and as early as 1793 he somewhat dazzled them by the success of his *Joan of Arc*. From that time forth until shortly before his death, in 1843, Southey never ceased to write. He was always closely identified in domestic relations with Wordsworth, whose neighbour he was in the Lakes for forty years, and with Coleridge, who was his brother-in-law. He early accepted what we may call the dry bones of the romantic system, and he published a series of ambitious epics—*Thalaba*, *Madoc*, *Kehama*, *Roderick*—which he intended as contributions to the new poetry. His disciple and latest unflinching admirer, Sir Henry Taylor, has told us that Southey "took no pleasure in poetic passion"—a melancholy admission. We could have guessed as much from his voluminous and vigorous writing, from which imagination is conspicuously absent, though eloquence, vehemence, fluency, and even fancy are abundant. The best part of Southey was his full admiration of some aspects of good literature, and his courageous support of unpopular specimens of these. When Wordsworth was attacked, Southey said, in his authoritative way, "A greater poet than Wordsworth there never has been, nor ever will be." He supported the original romantic movement by his praise, his weighty personality, the popular character of his contributions. But he added nothing to it; he could not do so, since, able and effective man of letters as he was, Southey was not, in any intelligible sense, himself a poet.

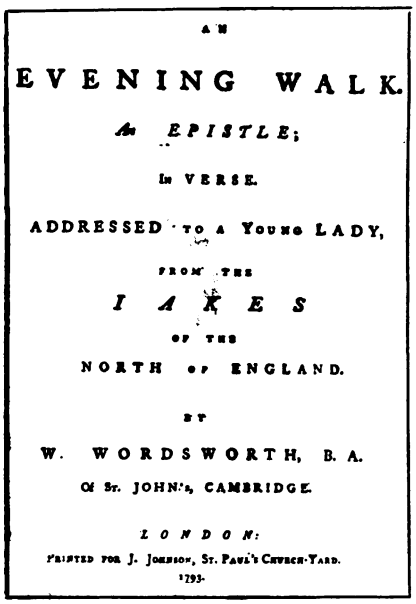
**William Wordsworth**

*After the Portrait by Carruthers*

**William Wordsworth** (1770–1850), the second son of John Wordsworth and Anne Cookson-Crackanthorp, his wife, was born at Cockermouth, in Cumberland, on the 7th of April 1770. His father, an attorney, was confidential agent to Sir James Lowther, afterwards Earl of Lonsdale. His mother, who died when he was eight, remarked that the only one of her five children about whose future life she was anxious was William, who was of "a stiff, moody, and violent temper." After a period of schooling at Cockermouth, Wordsworth lived from 1778 to 1783, when his father died, at Penrith, and went to school at Hawkshead. Mr. John Wordsworth had been crippled by the extraordinary tyranny of Lord Lonsdale, who had forced him to lend him his whole fortune—£5000—and who refused to repay it. The orphans were, however, brought up by their paternal uncles, who, in 1787, sent William to St. John's College, Cambridge. Here his intellectual nature developed to a degree which made him henceforth, as he said, "a dedicated spirit." In the *Prelude* long afterwards he describes a visit to the Continent which he paid in 1790, a vacation ramble in Switzerland being then so unhackneyed an event that he is justified in calling it "an unprecedented course." Wordsworth took his degree early in 1791, and left Cambridge without having selected a profession. He lived for some months, vaguely, in London, with no expressed purpose; in the following winter he crossed over to France, arriving in Paris when the Revolution, with which he entirely sympathised, was at its height. The year 1792 was spent at Orleans and at Blois, and after the massacres of September Wordsworth returned, full of Girondist enthusiasm, to Paris. He was prevented from taking an active part in French politics only by the ignominious but most happy circumstance that his uncles cut off his allowance. The execution of Louis XVI. was a tremendous shock to his moral nature, and his exultation over France was turned to miserable grief. Between William Wordsworth and his sister Dorothy there had subsisted from infancy the tenderest bond of sympathy; she was keeping house at Penrith when William rejoined his family early in 1793. Already they had formed the design of living together alone in some cottage. Meanwhile, upon his return from France, two thin pamphlets of Wordsworth's verse had been published—*The Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*, which were in the old Popesque manner, and which attracted no attention. In 1793 and 1794, when Wordsworth was not with his family, he was with Raisley Calvert, a young man of great intelligence. Calvert now died and left his friend a legacy of £900, on which he and his sister just contrived to live until the new Lord Lonsdale redeemed his father's pledges. In this way Wordsworth was able to devote himself entirely to meditation and poetry. In 1795 he persuaded his sister to join him in a small house at Racedown, near Crewkerne, in Dorset, where at last, in his twenty-sixth year, his genius began to display its true bent. Here he wrote

**Dove Cottage**
*From a Photograph*

the tragedy of *The Borderers*, and began, perhaps in 1796, *The Excursion*. Coleridge, who had met with *An Evening Walk*, was enthusiastically anxious to know its author, and a visit which he paid to the Wordsworths in June 1797 revealed to himself and to them their splendid vocation. In July the Wordsworths were allowed to rent, for a nominal sum, the fine manor-house of Alfoxden, at the northern foot of the Quantocks, where they were within a walk of Coleridge's cottage at Nether Stowey. Here the friends wrote that amazing collection, the *Lyrical Ballads*, which, in its first one-volume form, was published by Cottle in 1798. William and Dorothy spent the ensuing winter months at Goslar, in Germany, and here the former wrote some of his most exquisite lyrics. Here, too, he planned and began *The Prelude*, which remained unpublished until 1850. The Wordsworths returned to England in 1799, and after some hesitation settled at Townend, near Grasmere. He thus returned, at the age of thirty, to the scenes of his childhood, scenes which were to accompany him for the remainder of his life. His sailor brother, John, shared the cottage with William and Dorothy during the greater part of 1800: this brother it was—"a deep distress hath humanised my soul"—who died so tragically within sight of shore five years afterwards. Up to this time Wordsworth had lived mainly on Calvert's bequest, which was now reaching its end. He would have been forced to seek for employment, but most happily, at the critical moment, in 1801, Lord Lonsdale recognised the claim upon him, and returned the £5000 which his father had borrowed, with £3500 as full interest on the debt. On the interest of their shares of this money, together with a small annuity, William and Dorothy were now able to subsist, with strict frugality still, but without anxiety. In 1802 Wordsworth married Mary Hutchinson, of Penrith, a companion of the most delicate and appreciative susceptibility—Dorothy, of course, remaining a member of the household. In the summer of 1803 the three travelled through Scotland—a tour commemorated in several of William's best poems, especially *The Highland Girl*. In this year they formed the acquaintance of Walter Scott and of the painter, Sir George Beaumont, of Coleorton, who bought a little estate at Applethwaite, which he presented to Wordsworth, but the poet did not take it up. The friendship with Beaumont, however, became one of the closest of his life. The war with France, culminating in the battle of Trafalgar, excited the patriotism of Wordsworth, who wrote his *Happy Warrior* in 1805 as a requiem over Nelson, and his prose *Convention of Cintra* in 1808 as a contribution to practical politics. In 1807 a valuable collection of his *Poems* appeared, containing much of what he had written since 1800. Four children were born to him at Townend, when, in 1808, he moved to a larger house at the other end of Grasmere, where his last child, William, was born. In 1811 the Wordsworths moved again to the parsonage of


AN

EVENING WALK.

AN EPISTLE;

IN VERSE.

ADDRESSED TO A YOUNG LADY,

FROM THE

LAKES

OF THE

NORTH OF ENGLAND.

BY

W. WORDSWORTH, B. A.

OF ST. JOHN'S, CAMBRIDGE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR J. JOHNSON, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

1793.

**Title-page of Wordsworth's "Evening Walk," 1793**

Grasmere. The deaths of two of his children in 1812 made it impossible to stay in a place which, standing quite close to the churchyard, was to the parents an hourly reminder of their loss. In the early months of 1813, then, they moved to Rydal Mount, close to Ambleside, which was to be Wordsworth's home for the remainder of his long life. He was at the same time appointed Distributor of Stamps for the county of Westmoreland. Wordsworth now resided at Rydal as in a "Sabine valley," void of care and disturbance, with a few neighbours whom he distinguished with his friendship, and who deserved it. He became more and more conservative in his attitude towards life, and it is obvious that rather early what is called progress passed him by. After 1810, moreover, he grew gradually fossilised, or at least unbending, in his attitude to literature also, and the most fruitful portion of his career closes with the publication of *The Excursion* in 1814. In 1815 he published *The White Doe of Rylstone*, his only long poem with a story; and in a famous brace of essays, in which a reissue of his minor lyrics was set, he summed up his practical theory of poetics. In 1820 he issued his *Sonnets on the River Duddon*, and in 1820 he wrote a great deal of verse during a prolonged visit to Switzerland and Italy. The *Ecclesiastical Sketches* and *Memorials of a Tour on the Continent* belong to 1822. After this the years passed in great uniformity and stillness, broken only by the somewhat frequent visits which Wordsworth, who loved to travel, paid to the Continent and to Scotland. Of these, perhaps the most interesting was that to Abbotsford in 1831, to part from the dying Sir Walter Scott. In 1832 his sister Dorothy, whose companionship had been so precious a birthright to him, failed in mental health, and in 1834 he was called upon to bear the death of Coleridge. In 1835 he published *Yarrow Revisited*. All this time his reputation was steadily increasing, and he was seen magnified in that "celestial light" which Keble attributed to

**Peel Castle, the subject of Wordsworth's Poem**

*After the Picture by Sir George Beaumont*

**Wordsworth's Lodging at Hawkshead**

*From a Photograph*

his genius. When Southey died in 1843, Wordsworth was with difficulty persuaded to yield to the Queen's personal wish, and accept the post of Poet Laureate. In 1847 his daughter, Dora Quillinan, died at Rydal, and her loss was a wound which never healed. He sank from weakness, resulting on an attack of pleurisy, on the 23rd of April 1850, and his last words were, "Is that Dora?" He had just entered his eighty-first year. Wordsworth possessed a temperament of rare concentration, and he had the power of retiring to the inner fount of his own being, and resting there, to a degree scarcely paralleled in literary history. A heroic inward happiness, founded upon exalted reflection, is the keynote of Wordsworth's character. "Fits of poetic inspiration," as Aubrey de Vere has told us, "descended on him like a cloud, and, till the cloud had drifted, he could see nothing beyond." In these fits Wordsworth was, in his own words, "exalted to the highest pitch of delight by the joyousness and beauty of nature." The personal appearance of this most spiritual of poets was apt to disappoint his hasty admirers. He looked a tall, bony, Cumbrian yeoman, with a hard-featured countenance, honest and grave, but in no sense, and at no time of life, beautiful.

**William Wordsworth**

*From a Drawing by "Alfred Croquis" [Daniel Maclise]*

FROM "TINTERN ABBEY."

O sylvan Wye! Thou wand'rer through the woods,
How often has my spirit turn'd to thee!
And now, with gleams of half-extinguish'd thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,
And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first

My dear Cottle,

I received your letter enclosing a 5 £ Bank note. I am in want of money I shall therefore be obliged to you if you will remit to me, (not to my Brother as I before requested) the remaining 15 £ as soon as you can without inconvenience. Most probably your statement is accurate, for myself I recollect nothing about it. What I told you was from Dorothy's memory & she is by no means certain about it. . . .

You tell me the poems have not sold ill. If it is [illegible] I should wish to know what number have been sold.

From what I can gather it seems
that the Longest Measure has upon
the whole been an injury to the
[redacted] volume. I mean that the old word
& the strangeness of it have deterred
from going on. If the volume should come
to a second Edition I would put in its
place some little thing which would be
more likely to suit the common taste.

When you send the money pray look
over this letter & reply to this part of it.

I shall be obliged to you if you will
send me three copies of the Ballads
inclosed in your parcel to Charles Lloyd.
I shall easily get them from Penrith

We are highly gratified by the affectionate
wish which you express to see us again
in Somersetshire. We are as yet undetermined
where we shall settle. We have as

particulars house in view, so it is impossible for us to say when we shall have the pleasure of meeting you -

Dorothy sends her very kind love to you - God bless you, my dear Colle your affectionate Fd

W Wordsworth

Mrs J

Dear thank you for your care of our box - we do not at present want any of its contents -

2d June. Sockburn
near Northallerton Yorkshire
To be left at Smeaton

We have never heard from Coleridge since our arrival in England - we are anxious for news of him - I hope he is coming home as he does not write to us

I came among these hills ; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever Nature led ; more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For Nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days,
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion ; the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite : a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, or any interest
Unborrow'd from the eye. That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur ; other gifts
Have follow'd, for such loss, I would believe,
Abundant recompence. For I have learn'd
To look on Nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth ; but hearing oftentimes
The still, sad music of humanity,
Not harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts ; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean, and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man :
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows, and the woods,
And mountains ; and of all that we behold
From this green earth : of all the mighty world
Of eye and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive ; well-pleased to recognise
In Nature and the language of the sense,
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

### LUCY.

She dwelt among the untrodden ways
  Beside the springs of Dove,
A maid whom there were none to praise
  And very few to love.

A violet by a mossy stone
  Half hidden from the eye !
Fair as a star, when only one
  Is shining in the sky.

She lived unknown, and few could know
When Lucy ceased to be ;
But she is in her grave, and, oh,
The difference to me !

FROM "LAODAMIA."

He spake of love, such love as spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure ;
No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—
The past unsigh'd for, and the future sure ;
Spake, as a witness, of a second birth
For all that is most perfect upon earth :

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty ; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams ;
Climes which the sun, that sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

SONNET.

The shepherd, looking eastward, softly said,
"Bright is thy veil, O moon, as thou art bright !"
Forthwith, that little cloud, in ether spread,
And penetrated all with tender light,
She cast away, and shew'd her fulgent head
Uncover'd ; dazzling the beholder's sight
As if to vindicate her beauty's right,
Her beauty thoughtlessly disparagèd.
Meanwhile that veil, removed or thrown aside,
Went floating from her, dark'ning as it went ;
And a huge mass, to bury or to hide,
Approach'd this glory of the firmament ;
Who meekly yields, and is obscured ; content
With one calm triumph of a modest pride.

LINES

*Written in early Spring.*

I heard a thousand blended notes,
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad thoughts to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran ;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What man has made of man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths ;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd ;
Their thoughts I cannot measure ;
But the least motion which they made,
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan,
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If I these thoughts may not prevent,
If such be of my creed the plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What man has made of man?

FROM THE "ODE: INTIMATIONS OF IMMORTALITY.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We, in thought, will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind,
In the primal sympathy
Which having been, must ever be:
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering!
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

And O ye fountains, meadows, hills, and groves,
Think not of any severing of our lives!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel your might;
I only have relinquish'd one delight,
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the brooks, which down their channels fret,
Even more than when I tripp'd lightly as they:
The innocent brightness of a new-born day
Is lovely yet;
The clouds that gather round the setting sun
Do take a sober colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's mortality!
Another race hath been, and other palms are won.
Thanks to the human heart by which we live;
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears;
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

**Samuel Taylor Coleridge** (1772–1834) was the youngest of the thirteen children of the Rev. John Coleridge, Vicar of Ottery St. Mary, in the east of Devonshire, where the poet was born on the 21st of October 1772. His mother, Anne Bowden, was the vicar's second wife. He was an odd, dreamy child, "fretful and inordinately passionate," isolated by his love of reading and by his visions. He entered the grammar school at Ottery, of which his father was the master, in 1778. Soon after

his father's death S. T. Coleridge was placed at Christ's Hospital at the age of nearly ten. Here he made acquaintance with Lamb. "A poor friendless boy," Coleridge seems to have stayed in London seven years without once revisiting his family. In 1789 the publication of the *Sonnets* of Bowles awakened him to attempt serious poetic composition. In February 1791 Coleridge left school and went into residence as a sizar at Jesus College, Cambridge. Of his early life at the university not much is known, nor of the causes which led him to run away to London and enlist in the King's Light Dragoons in December 1793. He adopted the appropriate name of Comberback, for he could not ride. For better or worse, however, Coleridge had to continue to be a trooper for nearly four months. He was brought back to Jesus and admonished, but no further notice was taken of the escapade. At Oxford in the ensuing summer he met Southey, who converted him to the romantic scheme of a "pantisocratic" settlement on the banks of the Susquehana, and they wrote together and published at Cambridge a drama, *The Fall of Robespierre* (1794). Coleridge left Cambridge in December without a degree, and went to stay through the winter near Lamb in London, presently joining Southey at Bristol, where he lectured on politics.

**S. T. Coleridge**

*After a Pastel taken in Germany*

In 1795 he married Sara Fricker, and lived first at Clevedon, and then at various other places, feebly endeavouring to earn a living. An interesting volume of *Poems* marked the season of 1796, and in this year Coleridge published a very dull magazine, *The Watchman*. He also accepted, in June 1796, the sub-editorship of *The Morning Chronicle*, but whether he ever took up this post seems to be doubtful. Nervous and anxious, Coleridge suffered much from neuralgia, which left him "languid even to an inward perishing," and it was at this time that he had recourse to laudanum,

**The Cottage at Clevedon occupied by Coleridge**

to which he became more or less a slave for the remainder of his life. From the winter of 1796 to July 1800 the home of the Coleridges was Nether Stowey, a little remote town at the head of the Quantocks, in Somerset. Here, as has been said, he was close to Wordsworth, whom he had visited at Racedown in June, and who settled with his sister at Alfoxden in July 1797. At Stowey many—indeed, almost all—of Coleridge's best poems were composed. In 1798 he published his *Fears in Solitude*, and *France*, and in September of that year there appeared the famous anonymous volume of *Lyrical Ballads*. A day or two later Coleridge and Wordsworth sailed for Germany, where the former remained, wandering about, until June 1799, when he returned to Stowey. In 1800 he published his version of *Wallenstein*, and went to live with Wordsworth in the Lakes, at Dove Cottage. From July 24, 1800, to 1804, Greta Hall, at Keswick, was the residence of the Coleridges, although S. T. C., being now in a very depressed and morbid condition of mind and body, was seldom to be found there. In April 1804 he started alone for Malta, where he was appointed to act as private secretary to the Governor, Sir Alexander Ball. He visited Sicily, Naples, and Rome, and did not return to England until August 1806, when remorse for his neglect of his family and of his own interests justified him in describing himself as "ill, penniless, and worse than homeless." Coleridge, however, was received at Greta Hall with great indulgence, but it was soon found necessary to arrange a separation between him and his wife, followed, however, by a partial reconciliation. With one person, however, he had remained so long on good terms, that his quarrel with Wordsworth in 1810 seemed to mark the lowest stage of his degradation. Coleridge now occupied himself with a philosophical journal called *The Friend*, "an endless preface to an imaginary work." He came up to London, and lived obscurely, keeping up no correspondence with his family and friends in Cumberland. In 1812 he delivered his first series of "Lectures on Shakespeare," which were brilliantly attended; in the autumn he returned to Greta Hall, and became reconciled with Wordsworth. Byron, who had attended the lectures, with great courtesy induced the managers of the new Drury Lane to accept Coleridge's tragedy of *Remorse*. It was produced early in 1813, and Coleridge received £400, the only occasion during his whole life when he earned a substantial sum of money with his pen. This is perhaps the place at which to remark that Coleridge's life had been made possible only by the generosity of Josiah Wedgwood, who had paid him a pension of £150 a year since 1798. Of this £75 was arbitrarily withdrawn in 1812, and his wife and family would have been sharply pinched but for the opportune

**S. T. Coleridge**

*From an original Drawing by C. R. Leslie in the possession of E. H. Coleridge, Esq.*

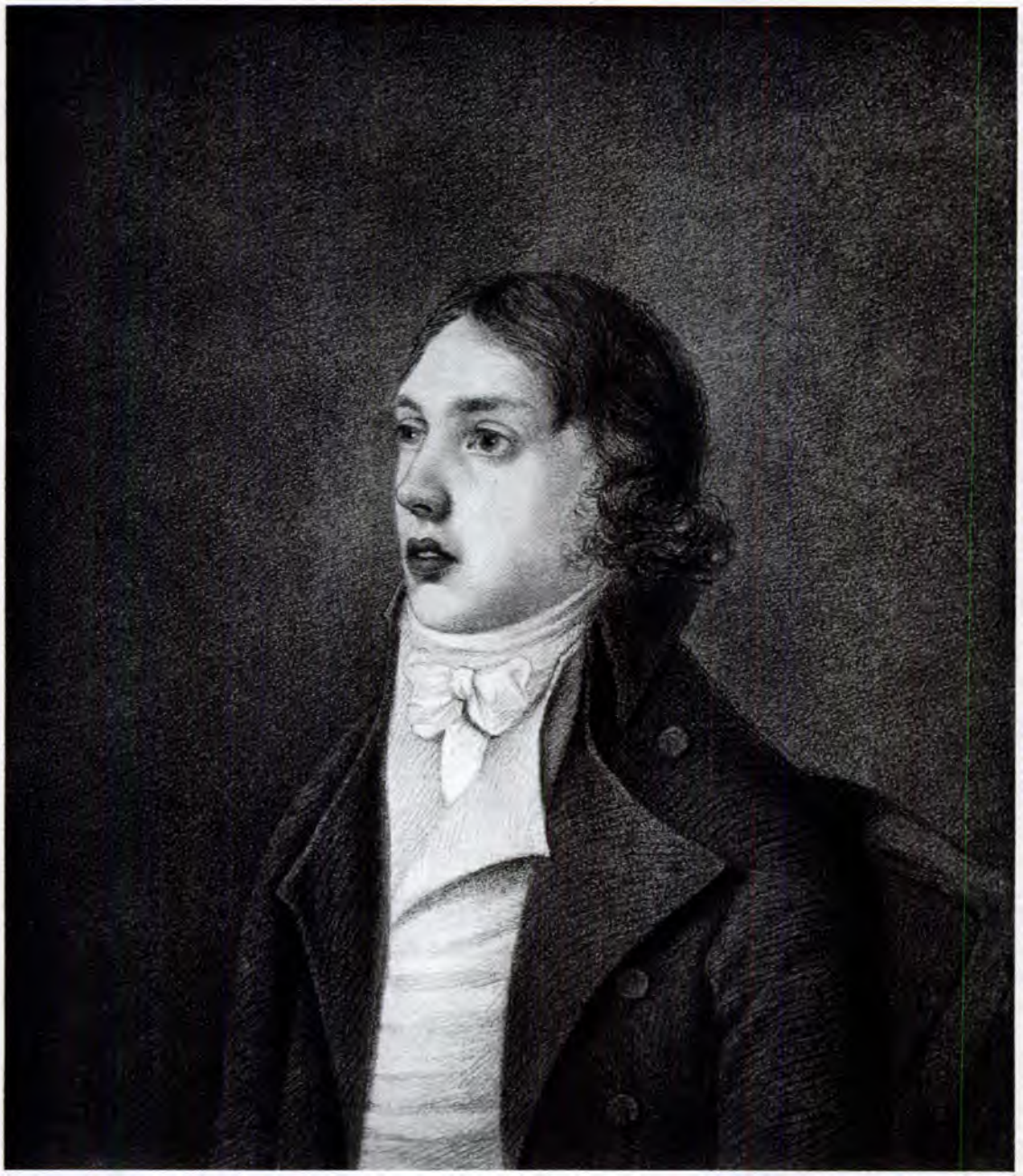
success of *Remorse*. Coleridge now sank very low under the dominion of laudanum. In his delirious self-abasement he desired, in 1814, to be placed in a private madhouse. He promised to go back with Southey to Greta Hall, but he failed to do so, and finally abandoned his wife and children to Southey's care. From 1814 to 1816 he was living at Calne in Wilts. He went up to London in March of that year, bringing with him several important MSS. It was now that Charles Lamb described him as "an archangel—a little damaged." His friends recommended that he should submit himself to the charge of a physician, Mr. Gillman, in whose house at Highgate he became a boarder in April 1816. Coleridge now published his *Christabel*, *Kubla Khan*, *The Pains of Sleep*, a slender volume of exquisite poetry, written many years before. The results of the retirement at Highgate were at first favourable: Coleridge managed to do a good deal of work. He published the *Biographia Literaria*, *Sibylline Leaves*, and *Zapolya*, all in 1817. But even lectures now ceased to be a resource. "From literature," he wrote in 1818, "I cannot gain even bread," for his publisher became bankrupt, owing him his returns on all his recent books. In 1820 his eldest son, Hartley, forfeited his fellowship at Oriel College, Oxford, mainly on the ground of intemperance; this last very heavy affliction bowed S. T. Coleridge to the ground, and threw him back upon excessive laudanum. The next few years were sad and almost empty, but in 1825 he published *Aids to Reflection*, and he received until the death of George III. a royal annuity of £100 a year, which prevented his having to scribble for bread. Carlyle now described him as "a sage escaped from the inanity of life's battle," and drew the celebrated portrait beginning, "Coleridge sat on the brow of Highgate Hill." He increased in bodily weakness, but with a mind always powerful and more and more serene. He took a tour up the Rhine, in the charge of the Wordsworths, in 1828. In the winter of 1833 he wrote his beautiful *Epitaph for S. T. C.*, and prepared himself for death. It came painlessly and in sleep on the morning of the 25th of July 1834.

**Mrs. S. T. Coleridge**

*From a Miniature in the possession of Ernest Hartley Coleridge, Esq.*

FROM "FRANCE—AN ODE."

Ye Clouds! that far above me float and pause,
Whose pathless march no mortal may control!
Ye Ocean-Waves! that, wheresoe'er ye roll,
Yield homage only to eternal laws!



SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY ROBERT HANCOCK

Ye Woods ! that listen to the night-birds singing,
  Midway the smooth and perilous slope reclined,
Save when your own imperious branches, swinging,
  Have made a solemn music of the wind !
Where, like a man belov'd of God,
Through glooms, which never woodman trod,
  How oft, pursuing fancies holy,
My moonlight way o'er flowering weeds I wound,
  Inspired, beyond the guess of folly,
By each rude shape and wild unconquerable sound !
O ye loud Waves ! and O ye Forests high !
  And O ye Clouds that far above me soared !
Thou rising Sun ! thou blue rejoicing Sky !
  Yea, everything that is and will be free !
  Bear witness for me, wheresoe'er ye be,
  With what deep worship I have still adored
    The spirit of divinest Liberty.

FROM "YOUTH AND AGE."

Flowers are lovely ! Love is flower-like ;
Friendship is a sheltering tree ;
O ! the joys, that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
                Ere I was old !
Ere I was old ? Ah, woful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here !
O Youth ! for years so many and sweet,
'Tis known, that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that Thou art gone !
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet toll'd—
And thou wert aye a masker bold !
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe, that Thou art gone ?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size :
But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes !
Life is but thought : so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve !
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve
                When we are old !
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest
That may not rudely be dismist,
Yet hath outstay'd his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
All, all that stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love.
And fan his sacred flame.

Ever in my waking dreams
I feed upon that happy hour
When midway on the mount I sate
Beside the ruin'd tower.

The moonshine stealing o'er the scene
Had blended with the light of Eve;
And she was there, my Hope, my Joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leant against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight:
She stood and listen'd to my harp
Amid the lingering light.

I play'd a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story;
And that rude song that fitted well
The ruin wild and hoary.

**MS. of the opening stanzas of "Love"**

## KUBLA KHAN.

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree:
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and towers were girdled round.
And here were gardens bright with sinuous rills,
Where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree;
And here were forests ancient as the hills,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted
Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!
A savage place! as holy and enchanted
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
A mighty fountain momently was forced;
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
It flung up momently the sacred river.
Five miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through wood and dale the sacred river ran,
Then reached the caverns measureless to man,
And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying war.

The shadow of the dome of pleasure
Floated midway on the waves;
Where was heard the mingled measure
Of the fountain and the caves.
It was a miracle of rare device,
A sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice!

A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw;
It was an Abyssinian maid,
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Abora.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such deep delight 'twould win me,
That with music loud and long,
I would build that dome in air,
That sunny dome! those caves of ice!
And all who heard should see them there,
And all should cry Beware! Beware!
His flashing eyes! his floating hair!

Extract from a Diary of S. T. Coleridge

A pillar grey did I behold:
From Sky & Earth it slanted!
And pois'd thereon a Bird so bold,
A faery Bird that chanted.
He sunk, he rose, he twinkled, he trolled,
Within that shaft of shiny Mist:
His Eyes of Fire, his Beak of Gold,
All else of Amethyst.

And thus he sang: Adieu! Adieu!
Love's dream prove seldom true!
Sweet Month of May! we must away!
Far, far away!
To day! To day!

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§ An unpublished poem by S. T. Coleridge. In the possession of E. H. Coleridge, Esq.

Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread,
For he on honey-dew hath fed
And drank the milk of Paradise.

LONDON PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY,

*SCOT'S CORPORATION HALL,*

CRANE COURT, FLEET STREET,

*(ENTRANCE FROM FETTER LANE.)*

***MR. COLERIDGE***

WILL COMMENCE

ON MONDAY, NOV. 18th,

*A COURSE OF LECTURES ON SHAKESPEAR AND MILTON,*

IN ILLUSTRATION OF

THE PRINCIPLES OF POETRY,

AND THEIR

*Application as Grounds of Criticism to the most popular Works of later English Poets, those of the Living included.*

After an introductory Lecture on False Criticism, (especially in Poetry,) and on its Causes: two thirds of the remaining course, will be assigned, 1st, to a philosophic Analysis and Explanation of all the principal *Characters* of our great Dramatist, as Othello, Falstaff, Richard 3d, Iago, Hamlet, &c.: and 2nd, to a critical *Comparison* of Shakespear, in respect of Diction, Imagery, management of the Passions, Judgment in the construction of his Dramas, in short, of all that belongs to him as a Poet, and as a dramatic Poet, with his contemporaries, or immediate successors, Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, Ford, Massinger, &c. in the endeavour to determine what of Shakespear's Merits and Defects are common to him with other Writers of the same age, and what remain peculiar to his own Genius.

The Course will extend to fifteen Lectures, which will be given on Monday and Thursday evenings successively. The Lectures to commence at ½ past 7 o'clock.

Single Tickets for the whole Course, 2 Guineas; or 3 Guineas with the privilege of introducing a Lady: may be procured at J. Hatchard's, 190. Piccadilly; J. Murray's, Fleet Street; J. and A. Arch's, Booksellers and Stationers, Cornhill; Godwin's Juvenile Library, Skinner Street; W. Pople's, 67, Chancery Lane; or by Letter (post paid) to Mr. S. T. Coleridge, J. J. Morgan's, Esq. No. 7, Portland Place, Hammersmith.

**Programme of Coleridge's Lectures of 1808**

## Work Without Hope.

*Lines Composed 21st February* 1827.

All Nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And Winter slumbering in the open air
Wears on his smiling face a dream of Spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrighten'd, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without Hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And Hope without an object cannot live.

BOATMEN'S SONG FROM "REMORSE."

Hear, sweet spirit, hear the spell,
Lest a blacker charm compel!
So shall the midnight breezes swell
With thy deep long-lingering knell.

And at evening evermore,
In a chapel on the shore,
Shall the chaunter, sad and saintly,
Yellow tapers burning faintly,
Doleful masses chaunt for thee,
Miserere Domine!

Hark! the cadence dies away
On the quiet moonlight sea:
The boatmen rest their oars and say,
Miserere Domine!

**Robert Southey** (1774–1843) was the eldest son of a linen-draper in Bristol, where, in a house in Wine Street, he was born on the 12th of August 1774. He was a sensitive child, whose idiosyncracies were encouraged by his being brought up, after the fashion of Rousseau's Emile, by an eccentric maiden aunt at Bath. He went to a school at Corston and elsewhere, and then at the age of fourteen to Westminster, already dreaming of becoming a poet. Here he stayed until 1792, when he was expelled for a literary jocosity at the expense of the headmaster. He returned to Bristol to find his father's business bankrupt; still, some months later he was able, at an uncle's cost, to proceed to Balliol College. He was now on fire with the principles of the French Republic; all he learned at Oxford, he says, was "a little swimming and boating." In 1793 he wrote in a few weeks the epic of *Joan of Arc*, and then "another epic poem and then another." His terrible fluency had already taken hold of him. In June of 1794 he met and was instantly fascinated by S. T. Coleridge, who communicated

**Robert Southey**

*After the Portrait by Henry Edridge*

to him the dream of pantisocracy; the lads agreed to emigrate together to America. This was prevented by their extreme poverty, but in 1795 they found a publisher in Bristol as enthusiastic as themselves, and a poet to boot, Joseph Cottle (1770–1853), who consented to publish their poems and give them money too. *Joan of Arc* was not issued until 1796, but in November Southey had married his boyhood's love, Mrs. Coleridge's sister, Edith Fricker, and a few days later had started alone for Madrid by sea from Falmouth to Corunna. In Spain he threw himself with ardour into the study of Spanish life and literature. Returning by Lisbon to Bristol, he tried in vain to live by journalism. The next months were vaguely spent, but in 1797–98 the Southeys are found residing in a little house at Westbury, Wilts, where he produced poetry with vehemence and volume, cheered by the companionship of Humphry Davy (1778–1829), the natural philosopher. His health broke down under excess of cerebral excitement, and in 1800 he went with his wife to Portugal to rest; but Southey could never be still, and at Lisbon and Cintra he wrote reams of verses. Next year Southey returned to England, published *Thalaba*, and presently visited the Coleridges at Keswick, but not at this time to stay there long. After fitful wanderings and many domestic changes, in 1802 he was back again in London and then in Bristol. Still he wandered; still, as he said, he had "no symptoms of root-striking." But in the autumn of 1803 he took Greta Hall, near Keswick, and this was his home for the next thirty-six years. As if the incessant journeys of his youth had awakened in him a passion for stability, Southey settled himself into Greta Hall like a tree. He filled it with his possessions and his interests, the fibres of his heart fitted into it and became part of it. It was not, however, until he had been its tenant for some four years that he realised that this was to be his final resting-place. It was also the home of the deserted wife and children of Coleridge, to whom Southey showed a most unselfish devotion. He sat down at his desk to punctual and almost mechanical literary labour, publishing many epics—*Madoc* in 1805, *The Curse of Kehama* in 1810, *Roderick* in 1814—and becoming, as he said, "a quiet, patient, easy-going hack of the mule breed, regular as clockwork in my pace," but cheerful and happy at all times. In a luckier age he would have soon been rich, but for few, and those the least important, of his works was Southey even decently paid. His only extravagance was books, of which he made an enormous and miscellaneous collection, especially rich in the Spanish and Portuguese languages. He was of all the men of letters of that age the most sedulous and deliberate craftsman; he made literature the trade of his life, and his multitude of books were his tools. He made many acquaintances, few friends; one of the most important of the latter being Landor, whom he met at Bristol in 1808—"the only man living," Southey declared, "of whose praise I was ambitious, or whose censure would have humbled me." Their sympathy

**Greta Hall, occupied by Southey, 1803–1839**

was mutually invaluable to both until the death of Southey. About this time Southey, who had refused to write for the *Edinburgh Review*, began his long course of contributions to the newly founded *Quarterly;* he had become quite a politician now, and a droll description is preserved of Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge laying down the law in conversation about the Convention of Cintra, like three Wise Men of the East. Southey became an effective political writer, and for some time the *Quarterly Review* and he were supposed to represent exactly the same views. In 1813 Southey succeeded a poetaster called Pye as Poet Laureate, thus raising the office from the ridiculous obscurity in which it had lain since the days of Dryden. In 1816 he suffered the terrible anguish of losing his son Herbert, the only being on whom he had dared to dote without restraint. He was never quite the same man again; he said he was to make "no more great attempts, only a few autumnal flowers, like second primroses." He went on steadily, however, with his tale of bricks, and the vast heap of his writings mounted up in prose and verse. Already it began to be seen by the clairvoyant that his genius lay in the former, not in the latter. Byron, who met him in 1813, and who boldly mocked at Southey's poetry, confessed "his prose is perfect." With certain exceptions, and these not fortunate ones, the remainder of Southey's life was devoted to prose, and mainly to history and biography. He abandoned the vast scheme of a *History of Portugal*, at which he had been working for many years, but in 1819 he completed a *History of Brazil*. His *History of the Peninsular War* extended over from 1822 to 1832. Meanwhile his admirable lives of Nelson (1813) and of John Wesley (1820) were being read with universal pleasure. His *Book of the Church* (1824) and his *Naval History* (*Lives of the British Admirals*), (1833–40) were more ambitious. In 1834 another great sorrow attacked him—his wife became insane, and in 1837 she died. In 1835 Southey refused a baronetcy, an honour foolishly offered to so poor a man, but he accepted a further pension of £300 a year. His only other production of importance was *The Doctor*, the seven volumes of which appeared between 1834 and 1847. Southey did not see its completion. Reduced to absolute loneliness at Greta Hall, he

**Robert Southey**

*After the Portrait by T. Phillips in the possession of John Murray, Esq.*

ROBERT SOUTHEY.
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY ROBERT HANCOCK.

married an old cultivated friend, the gentle poetess, Caroline Bowles (1787–1854); but her care could not save a brain and a body which had been overstrained. In 1839 his health broke down, and on the 21st of March 1843 he died. He was buried, in the presence of the venerable Wordsworth, in the churchyard of Crosthwaite. The moral nature of Southey had a beauty which is not reflected in his poetry. He

Keswick 3 May. 1838

My dear Sir

I will not let a post pass without acknowledging the receipt of your letter concerning Coleridge. What can I say upon so sad a subject? — What but that I always looked on with discomfort & sorrow to the disclosures which would be made after his death by some persons in mere ruthless indiscretion, by others in malice, & by some, or a few case in proper self-Defence! How few would conduct themselves with regard as little as you could a

There is one misapprehension concerning myself. My engagement as your Poet Laureate did not commence till 1798, & the quarterly stipend I supplied was never intended to be considered as making up Coleridge's pension

I never took up that Laureateship without reluctance. The genius & worth which I held it came very quickly to regard & the slender amount of a very considerable part of those Minor Poems which I can hardly bear parting, & upon which much careful correction has recently been bestowed, were written in your employ, & otherwise would not have been written.

Present my kindest regards to Mrs Stuart.

& believe me always

Yrs very truly

Robert Southey

**Facsimile Letter from Southey to Daniel Stuart**

was reserved—he "covered," he said, "his feelings with a bear-skin"—and his austerity and abruptness made him many enemies; but he was a man of the finest rectitude and the most practical generosity of heart, without jealousy, without littleness, bearing sorrow and pain with equanimity, nobly desirous to preserve intact the dignity of life and literature. His lifelong attitude to Wordsworth, to Coleridge and his family, to Scott, to Landor, to Davy, attests the constancy and the unselfishness of his character.

But he was hard in later life, and without any of the suppleness which makes social intercourse agreeable, while it is impossible to deny that he grew both arrogant and priggish. He had so handsome a presence in middle life that Byron declared that, to possess it, he would even have consented to write Southey's Sapphics.

FROM "THE CURSE OF KEHAMA."

Midnight, and yet no eye
Through all the Imperial City closed in sleep!
Behold her streets a-blaze
With light that seems to kindle the red sky,
Her myriads swarming through the crowded ways!
Master and slave, old age and infancy
All, all abroad to gaze;
House-top and balcony
Clustered with women, who throw back their veils
With unimpeded and insatiate sight
To view the funeral pomp which passes by,
As if the mournful rite
Were but to them a scene of joyance and delight.

Vainly, ye blessed twinklers of the night
Your feeble beams ye shed.
Quench'd in the unnatural light which might out-stare
Even the broad eye of day;
And thou from thy celestial way
Pourest, O Moon, an ineffectual ray!
For lo! ten thousand torches flame and flare
Upon the midnight air,
Blotting the lights of heaven
With one portentous glare.
Behold the fragrant smoke in many a fold
Ascending, floats along the fiery sky,
And hangeth visible on high,
A dark and waving canopy.

What effect the new ideas could produce on a perfectly ductile fancy may be observed in a very interesting way in the case of THOMAS CAMPBELL. This young Scotchman, born in 1777, had evidently seen no poetry more modern than that of Johnson, Goldsmith, and Rogers, when he published his *Pleasures of Hope*. The very name of this work discovered its adhesion to eighteenth-century tradition. It was a tame, "correct" essay, in a mode already entirely outworn. As a student it had been Campbell's pride to be styled "the Pope of Glasgow." When he became aware of them, he rejected all the proposed reforms of Wordsworth, whose work he continued to detest throughout his life; but in 1800 he proceeded to Germany, where he fell completely under the spell of the romantic poets of that nation, and presently gave to the world *Lochiel*, *Hohenlinden*, and the *Exile of Erin*. These were succeeded by other spirited ballads, amatory and martial, and by a romantic epic in Spenserian stanza, *Gertrude of Wyoming*, in which Campbell's style is wholly Teutonised. After this Campbell wrote little that was readable, and his fame, once far greater than that of Coleridge and Wordsworth, has now

dwindled to an unjust degree. He had a remarkable gift for lucid, rapid, and yet truly poetical narrative; his naval odes or descants, the *Battle of the Baltic* and *Ye Mariners of England*, are without rivals in their own class, and Campbell deserves recognition as a true romanticist and revolutionary force in poetry, although fighting for his own hand, and never under the flag of Wordsworth and Coleridge. For the time being, however, Campbell did more than they—more, perhaps, than any other writer save one—to break down in popular esteem the didactic convention of the classic school.

**Thomas Campbell** (1777–1844) was the eighth son and eleventh child of Alexander Campbell, a Virginia merchant of Glasgow, who had recently been ruined by the American War when the future poet was born on the 27th of July 1777. He was a precocious scholar and an early rhymester, and at the age of fourteen he entered the University of Glasgow with credit. His student verses were unusually spirited, his student speeches were delivered "with remarkable fluency and in a strong Glasgow brogue." In 1794 the poverty of his parents obliged him, though not yet seventeen, to accept a clerkship in a merchant's office, but his notion was to escape from this drudgery to America. In the summer of 1795, however, he obtained a tutorship at Sunipol, in the island of Mull, and started for the Western Highlands in company with a friend. "The wide world contained not two merrier boys; we sang and recited poetry through the long, wild Highland glens." This visit to Mull left an indelible impression on Campbell's imagination. It was followed in 1796 by a similar appointment on the Sound of Jura. In the year 1797 Campbell published, perhaps in a broadsheet, the earliest of his characteristic battle-poems, *The Wounded Hussar*, and was encouraged to look to literature as a profession. He moved his headquarters from Glasgow to Edinburgh, and in 1798 he began to compose *The Pleasures of Hope*. This poem appeared the following year, and "the demand for copies was unprecedented." The coteries of Edinburgh opened their arms to welcome the young poet, and among the

**Thomas Campbell**

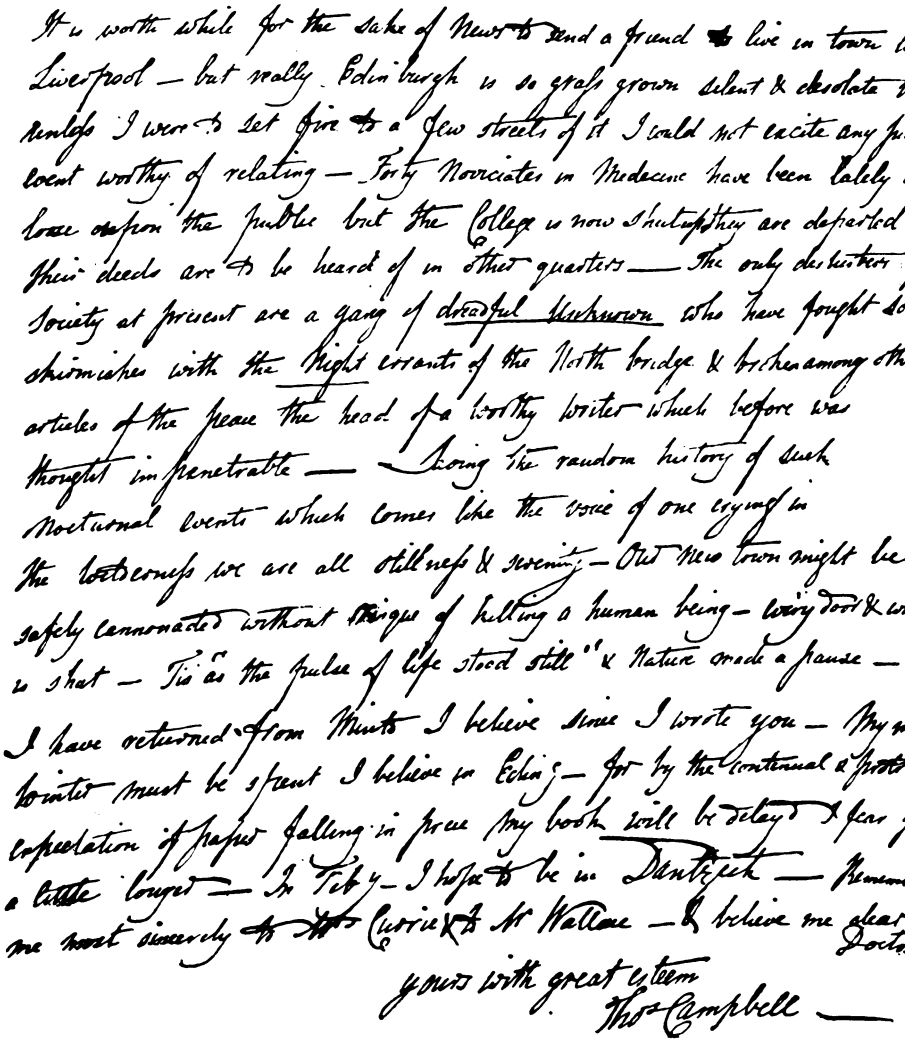
*After the Portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence*

friends his book brought him was the still youthful Walter Scott. *The Pleasures of Hope* exactly suited the taste of the day, and Campbell was "very much noticed and invited out." He spent the money which his poem brought him in foreign travel, and on 1st June 1800 left Leith for Hamburg. He had some stirring adventures, acquainted himself with much German literature, and returned to London in something less than a year. It was in Germany that several of his famous patriotic poems were composed. He settled again in Edinburgh, until in 1802 he accepted an invitation from Lord Minto to be his guest, and perhaps secretary, in his London house. A description of Campbell taken at this time, when he was in his twenty-sixth year, brings him before us as "scrupulously neat in his dress, . . . . a blue coat, with bright gilt buttons, a white waistcoat and cravat, buff nankins and white stockings, with shoes and silver buckles. His hair was already falling off; and he adopted the peruke, which he never afterwards laid aside." In 1803 appeared a subscription edition of Campbell's collected poems, which brought him in some money, and he was emboldened to marry his lively and elegant cousin, Miss Matilda Sinclair. The young couple took a house at Sydenham, which remained their home until 1820. Unfortunately, Campbell was, as he said, "always ready to shoot himself when he came to the subject of cash accounts," and his life became as a nightmare of financial embarrassment. In 1804 he wrote *The Battle of the Baltic* and *Lord Ullin's Daughter*, and this may be considered the highwater mark of his career as a poet. In 18 5 his distresses were relieved by a pension of £200 a year. The remainder of Campbell's life was not very interesting. In 1809 he published, with universal approbation, his *Gertrude of Wyoming*, a poem, as was then considered, instinct with "the soft and skyish tints of purity and truth," arranged in the Spenserian stanza as employed in *The Castle of Indolence*. In 1815 the Campbells, always wretched managers, were again in pecuniary distress, when a remote and eccentric Highland connection, who had heard of his piety to his mother and sister, remarked that "little Tommy the Poet ought to have a legacy," and then died, leaving him nearly £5000. Campbell became prominent as a lecturer on poetry, and he showed a broad sympathy in dealing with the treasures of our early literature. In 1820 he became editor of the *New Monthly Magazine*, an easy post with a handsome salary, which he held for ten years. His narrative poem, *Theodric*, appeared in 1824, and was a failure. Troubles now gathered upon Campbell; his only surviving child became insane, his excellent wife died, and he himself became the victim of irritable melancholia. He wrote much, in prose, but he did his work badly; his old fastidiousness and care seemed to have left him. His *Life of Mrs. Siddons* (1834), from which great things were expected, proved to be a deplorable piece of shirked hack-work. Campbell had lost the healthy gusto of life. He was still, however, a

**Thomas Campbell**

*From a Drawing by Daniel Maclise*

popular figure in society, and prominent at club meetings and public dinners. In 1834 he went to Algeria, with excellent results to his health. In this renewal of activity he composed his poem of *The Pilgrim of Glencoe*, and published it in 1842.



**Extract from a Letter of Campbell to Dr. James Currie**

No success attended this belated work. Campbell grew tired of London and settled at Boulogne, with a niece who now kept house for him. Here he died, on the 15th of June 1844, and was buried on the 3rd of July with great pomp in Westminster Abbey.

FROM "GERTRUDE OF WYOMING."

O love! in such a wilderness as this,
Where transport and security entwine,
Here is the empire of thy perfect bliss,
And here thou art a god indeed divine.

Here shall no forms abridge, no hours confine
The views, the walks, that boundless joy inspire!
Roll on, ye days of raptured influence, shine!
Nor, blind with ecstasy's celestial fire,
Shall love behold the spark of earth-born time expire.

Three little moons, how short! amidst the grove
And pastoral savannahs they consume!
While she, beside her buskined youth to rove,
Delights, in fancifully wild costume,
Her lovely brow to shade with Indian plume;
And forth in hunter-seeming vest they fare;
But not to chase the deer in forest gloom;
'Tis but the breath of heaven—the blessed air—
And interchange of hearts unknown, unseen to share.

What though the sportive dog oft round them note,
Or fawn, or wild bird bursting on the wing;
Yet who, in love's own presence, would devote
To death those gentle throats that wake the spring,
Or writhing from the brook its victim bring?
No!—nor let fear one little warbler rouse;
But, fed by Gertrude's hand, still let them sing,
Acquaintance of her path, amidst the boughs,
That shade e'en now her love, and witnessed first her vows.

SONG.—TO THE EVENING STAR.

Star that bringest home the bee,
And sett'st the weary labourer free!
If any star shed peace, 'tis thou,
That send'st it from above,
Appearing when Heaven's breath and brow
Are sweet as hers we love.

Come to the luxuriant skies,
Whilst the landscape's odours rise,
Whilst far-off lowing herds are heard,
And songs, when toil is done,
From cottages whose smoke unstirred
Curls yellow in the sun.

Star of love's soft interviews,
Parted lovers on thee muse;
Their remembrancer in Heaven
Of thrilling vows thou art,
Too delicious to be riven
By absence from the heart.

THE SOLDIER'S DREAM.

Our bugles sang truce—for the night-cloud had lowered,
And the sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;
And thousands had sunk on the ground overpowered,
The weary to sleep, and the wounded to die.

When reposing that night on my pallet of straw,
By the wolf-scaring faggot that guarded the slain;
At the dead of the night a sweet vision I saw,
And thrice ere the morning I dreamt it again.

Methought from the battle-field's dreadful array,
Far, far I had roamed on a desolate track :
'Twas Autumn—and sunshine arose on the way
To the home of my fathers, that welcomed me back.

I flew to the pleasant fields traversed so oft
In life's morning march, when my bosom was young ;
I heard my own mountain-goats bleating aloft,
And knew the sweet strain that the corn-reapers sung.

Then pledged we the wine-cup, and fondly I swore,
From my home and my weeping friends never to part ;
My little ones kissed me a thousand times o'er,
And my wife sobbed aloud in her fulness of heart,

"Stay, stay with us—rest, thou art weary and worn ;"
And fain was their war-broken soldier to stay—
But sorrow returned with the dawning of morn,
And the voice in my dreaming ear melted away.

*Sir Walter Scott as a Poet.*

A still greater force in popularising and fixing the romantic tradition was Sir WALTER SCOTT in the poetry of his early middle life — that is to say, from 1799 to 1814. From the dawn of childhood he had shown an extraordinary passion for listening to chivalrous and adventurous tales, and for composing the like. He was fortunate enough to see and to be greatly moved by Burns; and as he advanced, the intense Scotticism of his nature was emphasised by the longing to enshrine Scotch prowess and nature in picturesque verse. The mode in which this was to be done had not even dimly occurred to him, when he met with that lodestar of romanticism, the *Lenore* of Bürger ; he translated it, and was led to make fresh eager inroads into German poetry, with which he was much more in sympathy than Wordsworth was, or even Coleridge. Even Goethe,

**Sir Walter Scott**

*After the Portrait by Sir Henry Raeburn*

however, did not at this time persuade Scott to make a deep study of literature; he was still far more eager to learn in the open school of experience. He imitated a few German ballads, and he presently began to collect the native songs of his own country; the far-reaching result was the publication of the *Scottish Minstrelsy*.

Still, nothing showed that Walter Scott was likely to become an original writer, and he was thirty-four when Europe was electrified with the appearance of the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*. Then followed *Marmion*, the *Lady of the Lake*, and the *Lord of the Isles*, not to speak of other epical narratives which were not so successful. Meanwhile, the publication of *Waverley* opened another and a still more splendid door to the genius of Scott, and he bade farewell to the Muses. But from 1805 to 1815 he was by far the most prominent British poet; as Wordsworth put it, Scott was "the whole world's darling," and no one, perhaps, before or since, has approached the width and intensity of his popularity. While Wordsworth distributed a few hundreds of his books, and Coleridge could not induce his to move at all, Scott's poetry sold in tens of thousands, and gave the tone to society. At the present day something of the charm of Scott's verse-narratives has certainly evaporated; they are read for the story, a fatal thing to confess about poetry. The texture of Scott's prosody is thinner and looser than that of his great contemporaries, nor are his reflections so penetrating or so exquisite as the best of theirs. Nevertheless, the divine freshness and exuberance of Scott are perennial in several of his episodes, and many of his songs are of the highest positive excellence. Perhaps if he had possessed a more delicate ear, a subtler sense of the phases of landscape, something of that mysticism and passion which we unwillingly have to admit that we miss in his poetry, he might not have interpreted so lucidly to millions of readers the principles of the romantic revival. With his noble disregard of self, he bade

**Sir Walter Scott**

*After the Portrait by Stewart Newton*

Dear Sir

I have been very unwilling your letter for my fingers got frost bitt walking thro' the lake called wather like an old fool as I was. I have been looking out for pretty Abbots first but I cannot find any but one which is not very accurate there another I know which overlepps some Buck and plenty which I will bring to get. Thomas friend Coleridge says

Oh sleep it is a dreadful ting to lose
Soul comfortable and warm unblessed. If you would come down and look at it I think it would give me more pleasure I have two or three most picturesque dogs particularly a superb bloodhound new very rare I used to have clever horses too but have escaped the scandals for years to my great regret.

I have some where another ballad about Mary Queen of Scots expressed by the Three Casters which I have altered to suit the ballad to which you apply more than Burns deserves.

I have a plan to upset the wisdom of auld Edmund Dan Terry of the Adelphi Theatre with some scenery: from the interior of Abbots for Hamlet

of the few curiosities & curiosities Museum I should have offered the profits of that book which I have

The engraving of Bothwell's removal at the Burley is certainly by far the best we have yet had of the many works No wonder he has such pensions for the painting he copied was admirable. I only regret the expenditure does little justice to the artist and engraver

I will send you my transcript as soon as I can collect it Percy Reed was a real person and actually claim by a Clan called Cooper as I am told connected to the unhappy death of Rizzio

Edinr. 1st. February 1830

I remain dear Sir
Your obliged Servant
Walter Scott

Percy Reed is coming to Scotland on summer when you may shall feel found some fine studies

those who sought the higher qualities find them in Wordsworth; but Scott also, with his vigour of invention and his masculine sense of flowing style, took a prominent and honourable part in the reformation of English poetry.

**Sir Walter Scott** (1771–1832) was one of the twelve children of Mr. Walter Scott, Writer to the Signet, and of Anne Rutherford his wife. Six died in infancy, and he was the fourth of the survivors. He was born on the 15th of August 1771,

**Abbotsford, Scott's residence from 1811 to his death in 1832**

in a house at the head of the College Wynd in Edinburgh. He showed, he tells us, every sign of health and strength until he was about eighteen months old, when, as the result of a fever, he lost for life all power in his right leg. He was taken into the country, where he was placed under the care of a nurse, who afterwards proved to be a lunatic, and who, just in time to be prevented, confessed an intention to cut the child's throat with her scissors and bury him in the moss on the Craigs. He was early instructed in literature by his aunt, Mrs. Janet Scott, who encouraged the romantic bent of his temper. In 1778 Scott was sent to the High School of Edinburgh, without brilliant results: "I was never a dunce, nor thought to be so, but an incorrigibly idle imp, who was always longing to something else than what was enjoined him." As he grew fast, his health became delicate, and after leaving school, before proceeding to college, it was thought well

that he should spend half a year in his aunt's house at Kelso. To this episode Scott attributed the awakening in his soul of an appreciation of natural beauty, "especially when combined with ancient ruins." For some months of 1782–83 he was taught at the grammar-school of Kelso. On the lad's return to Edinburgh he began to throw himself with great ardour into the study of the romantic literature of Europe, especially Italian. It was in the midst of these emotions, in 1786, that Scott, a boy of fifteen, saw Burns at the height of his renown. At this time Scott had left college, and had entered into indentures with his father with a view

**The Entrance Hall at Abbotsford**

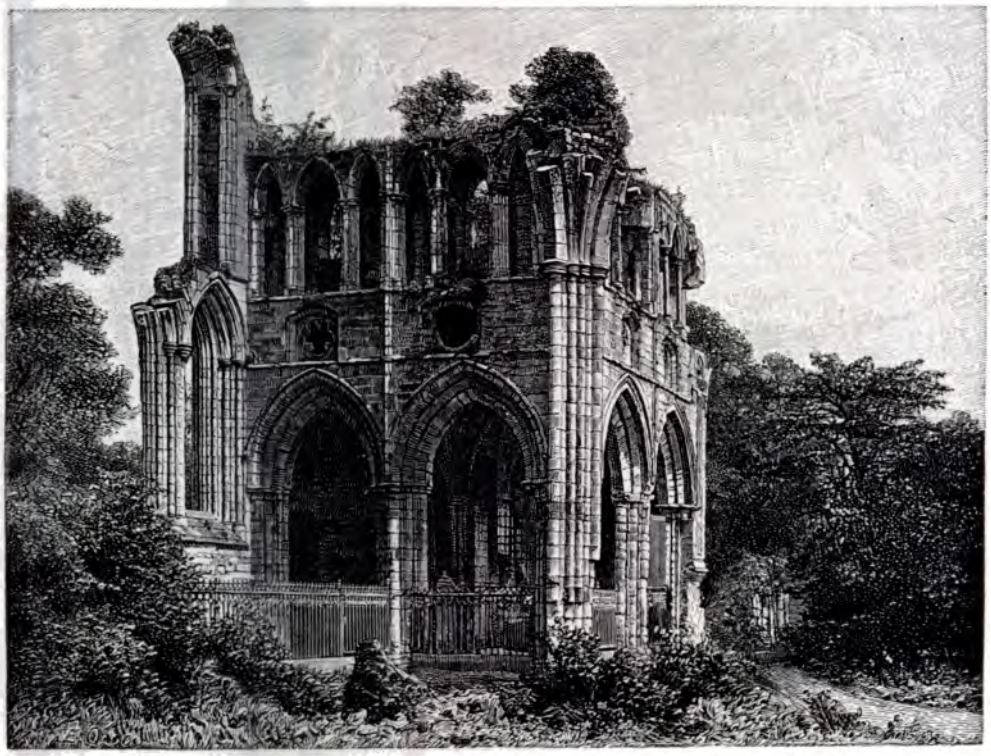
to becoming a Writer to the Signet. He disliked the drudgery, although he worked hard at the business out of pride in and love for his father, but in the spring of 1788 he broke a blood-vessel, and a lengthy illness was the result. From this, strange to say, he rose to health far more robust than he had ever before enjoyed, tall, muscular, and active both on foot and on horseback. About this time Scott began to "take his ground" in society; he displayed an ardour, a flow of agreeable spirits, and an acute perception which rendered him noticeably welcome in any company. From 1789 to 1792 he studied assiduously for the Bar, and these were "the only years of his life which he applied to learning with stern, steady, and undeviating industry." He passed his examinations in Civil Law in June 1791, and in Scots Law in July 1792, and a week later assumed the gown of a barrister. Walter Scott was now, as the Duchess of Sutherland said, "a comely creature,"

remarkably vigorous, but never clumsy, in form and movement, brilliant in colour and complexion. He fell in love with Miss Williamina Belches of Invermay, whom he courted for several years, but without success, for she became Lady Forbes of Pitsligo. In the autumn of 1792 Scott made his earliest study of the wild country of the Border, and in the following year he explored, in the spirit of a romantic antiquarian, great part of the central portion of Scotland. In 1796 he translated Bürger's *Lenore*, and published this anonymously with one or two other fragments of the new German poetry in a thin quarto; this was Scott's first appearance in

**Scott's Study at Abbotsford**

print. He was now attracted to a young French lady of great beauty, Miss Charlotte Margaret Carpenter (or rather Charpentier), whom he married in December 1797, after a very brief courtship. The young couple settled in Edinburgh, at lodgings in George Street, until the house he had taken in South Castle Street was ready for them; a few months later he supplemented this by a cottage six miles out of the city, at Lasswade. Under the influence of "Monk" Lewis, Scott began imitating and translating more busily from the German, and in 1799 he published a version of Goethe's *Goetz von Berlichingen*. He now began the serious composition of English verse, and he formed, or reopened, a friendship with James Ballantyne, the printer of Kelso, which was destined to lead to great results. At the end of this year, 1799, Scott was appointed Sheriff of Selkirkshire, an office which brought him into close relations with a romantic part of Scotland to which his poetic atten-

tion had already been called. He began to contribute in 1803 to the *Edinburgh Review*, but his chief occupation now became the collection of the *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, of which three volumes appeared in 1802 and 1803. Scott was now fairly launched on the flood of his romantic work, and in the first days of 1805 the *Lay of the Last Minstrel* was brought out in London with a success so encouraging that Scott determined henceforth to make literature his principal profession. This determination became the more fixed as he saw his chances of success at the Scotch Bar to be very scanty, "for more than ten years he



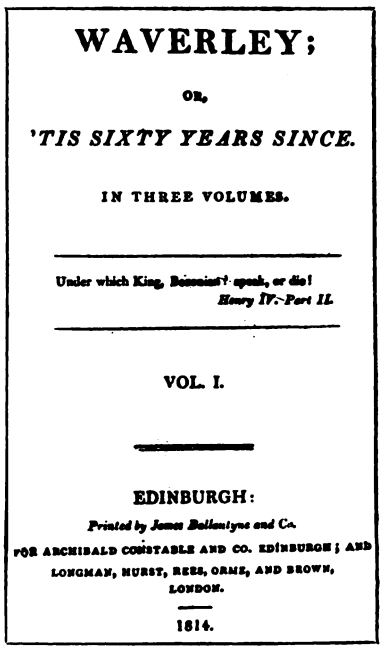
**Ruins of Dryburgh Abbey**

had persisted in surveying the floor of the Parliament House, without meeting with any employment but what would have suited the dullest drudge." He therefore quitted the law, and secretly entered into partnership with James Ballantyne as a printer-publisher. In this same eventful year, 1805, he began to write *Waverley*, although he soon dropped it. Ashestiel, a small house most romantically situated close to the Tweed, was now his home, and he had settled down with ardour into the life of an active country squire and sportsman. At Edinburgh he added to his emoluments by being Clerk of Session, a post which he held from 1806 to 1830. He was now engaged in editing Dryden, in writing *Marmion*, which appeared in 1808, in starting Ballantyne on vast schemes as a publisher, and in encouraging the foundation of the *Quarterly Review*. He then turned to the task of editing Swift, and completed an unfinished historical romance by Joseph Strutt (1749-1802), called *Queenhoo Hall*, which

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

After the Portrait by Sir William Allan.

has been described as the forerunner of the Waverley novels. The accounts which have come down to us of the breezy, wholesome domestic life at Ashestiel, lead us to regard these as the very happiest years in the career of Walter Scott. He pushed on with the publication of his successive poems; *The Lady of the Lake* followed in 1810, and *The Vision of Don Roderick* in 1811. The first of these was successful beyond all precedent, but there was already a financial cloud on Scott's horizon; Ballantyne was doing very badly with other of his speculations, and if Scott was making money, he was losing it too. Nevertheless, so excellent seemed his prospects in other quarters, that in 1811 he was emboldened—the lease of Ashestiel having run out—to buy the estate of Abbotsford on the Tweed. It must be recollected, before charging him with rashness, that from 1812 his professional income was £1600 a year, besides what he might earn by literature. At this moment, however, Byron sprang upon the world, and it became evident that he would form a most serious rival to Scott as a popular poet. Moreover, Scott's ventures in 1813, *Rokeby* and *The Bridal of Triermain*, were coldly received by the public. The publishing business with Ballantyne was wound up, with help from the Duke of Buccleuch, and Constable was much mixed up with starting again what is still a puzzling business. Scott was now offered the appointment of Poet Laureate; he declined it, but suggested Southey, to whom it was then given. Scott, however, had now completed his first novel, *Waverley*, and in July 1814, with every circumstance of secrecy, this book was published. Scott was "not sure that it would be considered quite decorous for a Clerk of Session to write novels;" he was also, no doubt, anxious to see whether he could whistle the public to him by his mere charm and fashion of delivery. The result was extremely gratifying; the success of *Waverley* was instant and enormous. Scott's life now became one of unceasing activity, book following book with rapid regularity. In 1815 he published the last of his important narrative poems, *The Lord of the Isles*, and the novel of *Guy Mannering*. The series of *Tales of my Landlord* began in 1816. It is impossible, and quite needless, to register here the names of all the deathless succession of Scott's novels, a series unbroken up to 1829. In 1817 Scott had the first warning that his health could not support for ever the violent strain which he was always putting upon it. He was created a baronet early in 1820, the first creation of George IV.'s reign. Sir Walter came up to London for this purpose, and stayed to sit for his picture to Lawrence, and for his bust to Chantrey. Two years later the king came to Scotland, and was welcomed by Scott, who innocently loved a pageant, "in the Garb of old Gaul," and with a loyalty which knew no bounds. He founded the Ballantyne Club in 1823, but in the winter of this year the illness of which he died began to make itself felt; this was almost coincident with the completion of Abbotsford. By this time, however, Scott's unfortunate and secret connection with Constable and with the Ballantyne firm



WAVERLEY;

OR,

'TIS SIXTY YEARS SINCE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

Under which King, Bezonian? speak, or die!
Henry IV.—Part II.

VOL. I.

EDINBURGH:
Printed by James Ballantyne and Co.
FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE AND CO. EDINBURGH; AND
LONGMAN, HURST, REES, ORME, AND BROWN,
LONDON.
1814.

**Title-page of First Edition of "Waverley"**

had become a distinct cloud upon his horizon, and this grew and darkened. The ruin of these enterprises became certain at the close of 1825, and the bankruptcy of Sir Walter Scott was the result. It was presently settled that he should be left in undisturbed possession of Abbotsford, but should part with all his other property, live within his official salary, and pay his debt by continuing his literary labours with his best diligence. With noble courage he began to write at once, and pursued his work in spite of the further shock of his wife's death in May 1826. By June 1827 he had diminished his debt by £28,000, and would soon have cleared himself from all his encumbrances had moderate health been spared him. But he worked far too hard, and he was checked in 1828 by a threatening of apoplexy. His work was not received with so much public favour as he had been accustomed to, and he was a good deal discouraged. But more of his debts were paid; he was passionately eager to be free; through the last year of his labour he was "a writing automaton." His latest romance was *Anne of Geierstein*, 1829, but he went on writing history. In 1830 a paralytic seizure warned him to desist, but in vain; not until October 1831 would he consent to rest. He was taken to Malta and to Naples, but his health steadily declined. His family were barely able, in July, to bring him back alive to Abbotsford, where, on the 21st of September 1832, he died, within "the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles." He was buried five days later in the Abbey of Dryburgh.

**Sir Walter Scott**

*From the Bust by Chantrey*

BOAT SONG FROM "THE LADY OF THE LAKE."

Hail to the chief who in triumph advances!
Honoured and blessed be the ever-green Pine!
Long may the Tree in his banner that glances,
Flourish the shelter and grace of our line!
Heaven send it happy dew,
Earth lend it sap anew,
Gaily to bourgeon, and broadly to grow,
While every highland glen
Sends our shout back agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho! ieroe!"

Ours is no sapling, chance-sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane, in winter to fade;
When the whirlwind has stripped every leaf on the mountain,
The more shall Clan-Alpine exult in her shade.
Moored in the rifted rock,
Proof to the tempest's shock,

Firmer he roots him the ruder it b'ow ;
Menteith and Breadalbane, then,
Echo his praise agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Proudly our pibroch has thrilled in Glen Fruin,
And Banochar's groans to our slogan replied ;
Glen Luss and Ross-dhu, they are smoking in ruin,
And the best of Loch-Lomond lies dead on her side.
Widow and Saxon maid
Long shall lament our raid,
Think of Clan-Alpine with fear and with woe ;
Lennox and Leven-glen
Shake when they hear agen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

Row, vassals, row, for the pride of the Highlands !
Stretch to your oars, for the ever-green Pine !
O ! that the rosebud that graces yon islands,
Were wreathed in a garland around him to twine !
O that some seedling gem,
Worthy such noble stem,
Honoured and blessed in their shadow might grow !
Loud should Clan-Alpine then
Ring from her deepmost glen,
"Roderigh Vich Alpine dhu, ho ! ieroe !"

### Lady Heron's Song in "Marmion."

Oh ! young Lochinvar is come out of the west,
Through all the wide Border his steed was the best ;
And, save his good broadsword, he weapon had none,
He rode all unarmed, and he rode all alone.
So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,
There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.

He staid not for brake, and he stopped not for stone,
He swam the Eske river where ford there was none ;
But, ere he alighted at Netherby gate,
The bride had consented, the gallant came late ;
For a laggard in love, and a dastard in war,
Was to wed the fair Ellen of brave Lochinvar.

So boldly he entered the Netherby Hall,
Among bride's-men, and kinsmen, and brothers, and all.
Then spoke the bride's father, his hand on his sword
(For the poor craven bridegroom said never a word),
"Oh ! come yè in peace here, or come ye in war,
Or to dance at our bridal, young Lord Lochinvar?"

"I long wooed your daughter, my suit you denied ;—
Love swells like the Solway, but ebbs like its tide—
And now I am come, with this lost love of mine,
To lead but one measure, drink one cup of wine,
There are maidens in Scotland more lovely by far,
That would gladly be bride to the young Lochinvar."

The bride kissed the goblet ; the knight took it up,
He quaffed off the wine, and threw down the cup.

She looked down to blush, and she looked up to sigh,
With a smile on her lips, and a tear in her eye.
He took her soft hand, ere her mother could bar,—
"Now tread we a measure," said young Lochinvar.

So stately his form, so lovely her face,
That never a hall such a galliard did grace;
While her mother did fret, and her father did fume,
And the bridegroom stood dangling his bonnet and plume;
And the bridemaidens whispered, "'Twere better by far
To have matched our fair cousin with young Lochinvar."

One touch to her hand, and one word in her ear,
When they reached the hall-door, and the charger stood near;
So light to the croupe the fair lady he swung,
So light to the saddle before her he sprung;
"She is won! we are gone! over bank, bush, and scaur;
They'll have fleet steeds that follow," quoth young Lochinvar.

There was mounting 'mong Græmes of the Netherby clan;
Forsters, Fenwicks, and Musgraves, they rode and they ran:
There was racing and chasing on Cannobie Lee,
But the lost bride of Netherby ne'er did they see.
So daring in love, and so dauntless in war,
Have ye e'er heard of gallant like young Lochinvar?

FROM "THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL."

Hushed is the harp—the Minstrel gone,
And did he wander forth alone?
Alone, in indigence and age,
To linger out his pilgrimage?
No:—close beneath proud Newark's tower,
Arose the Minstrel's lowly bower;
A simple hut; but there was seen
The little garden edged with green,
The cheerful hearth, and lattice clean.
There, sheltered wanderers, by the blaze,
Oft heard the tale of other days;
For much he loved to ope his door,
And give the aid he begged before.
So passed the winter's day! but still
When summer smiled on sweet Bowhill
And July's eve, with balmy breath,
Waved the blue-bells on Newark heath;
When throstles sung in Hare-head shaw,
And corn was green on Carterhaugh,
And flourished, broad, Blackandro's oak,
The aged Harper's soul awoke!
Then would he sing achievements high,
And circumstance of chivalry,
Till the rapt traveller would stay,
Forgetful of the closing day;
And noble youths, the strain to hear,
Forsook the hunting of the deer;
And Yarrow, as he rolled along,
Bore burden to the Minstrel's song.

These, then, were the influences at work during the fifteen years with which the century opened, and so completely was the old tradition overcome that poetry of the class of Johnson and Pope abruptly ceased, not, indeed, to be admired, but to be composed. A little group of pious writers, of whom Robert Bloomfield (1766–1823), and James Grahame (1765–1811) may be named, endeavoured to keep blank verse and the heroic couplet as they had received it from their Thomsonian forefathers. But although the *Farmer's Boy* (1798) and the *Sabbath* (1802) had many imitators and enjoyed a preposterous popularity, their influence was quite outside the main channels of literary activity. The critics stormed against the reforms introduced by Wordsworth, and ridiculed his splendid experiments. But after the preface of 1800 nobody who had any genuine poetic gift could go on writing in the eighteenth-century way, and, as a curious matter of fact, no one except the satirists did attempt to do so.

*Edmund Burke*

But it is time to turn to the condition of prose, which, however, offers us at this juncture in our history fewer phenomena of importance. The one great prose-writer of the close of the eighteenth century was EDMUND BURKE, and his peculiarities are to be studied to best effect in what he wrote between 1790 and his death in 1797. Burke is, therefore, strictly transitional, and it is not less rational to consider him as the forerunner of De Quincey than as the successor of Robertson and Gibbon. He is really alone in the almost extravagant splendour of his oratory, too highly coloured for the eighteenth century, too hard and resonant for the nineteenth. When Burke is at his best, as for instance in the *Letter to a Noble Lord*, it is difficult to admit that any one has ever excelled him in the melody of his sentences, the magnificence of his invective, the trumpet-blast of his sonorous declamation. It is said that Burke endeavoured to mould his style on that of Dryden. No resemblance between the richly-brocaded robes of the one and the plain russet of the other can be detected. It is not quite certain that the influence of Burke on succeeding prose has been altogether beneficial; he has seemed to encourage a kind of hollow vehemence, an affectation of the "grand style" which in less gifted rhetoricians has covered poverty of thought. We must take Burke as he is, without comparing him with others; he is the great exception, the man essentially an orator whose orations were yet literature. There is an absence of emotional imagination, however, in Burke which is truly typical of the rhetor. In this, as in so much else, Burke is seen still to belong to the eighteenth century. He died just when the young folks in Western Somerset were working out their revolutionary formulas in verse; he missed even the chance of having these presented to his attention. We may be absolutely certain, however, that he would have rejected them with as much scorn and anger as he evinced for the political principles of the French Revolution. Whoever might have smiled on Goody Blake and Betty Foy, it would not have been the fierce and inflexible author of the letters *On a Regicide Peace.*

It was, perhaps, a fortunate thing for literature that Burke should die at that juncture and at the meridian of his powers. His last Tracts sum up the prose of the century with a magnificent burst of sincere and transcendent ardour. He retains the qualities which had adorned the dying age, its capacity in the manipulation of abstract ideas, its desire for the attainment of intellectual truth, its elegant and persuasive sobriety, its limited but exquisitely balanced sense of literary form. But Burke was a statesman too, and here he turns away from his eighteenth-century predecessors; he will be bound by no chains of abstract reasoning. Theories of politics were to him "the great Serbonian bog"; he refused to listen to metaphysical discussions; when he was dealing with American taxation, "I hate the very sound of them," he said. As he grew older, his mind, always moving in the train of law and order, grew steadily more and more conservative. He rejected the principles of Rousseau with scorn, and when there arose before him a "vast, tremendous, unformed spectre" in the far more terrific guise of the French Revolution, Burke lost not a little of his self-command. He died with the prophetic shrieks of the *Regicide Peace* still echoing in men's ears; he died without a gleam of hope for England or for Europe, his intellect blazing at its highest incandescence in what he believed to be the deepening twilight of the nations.

**Edmund Burke**

*After the Portrait by George Romney*

**Edmund Burke** (1729–1797) was the son of a respectable solicitor of Dublin, where he is believed to have been born on the 12th of January 1729. His mother was a Nagle, and an earnest Catholic, but he himself and his two brothers were brought up as Protestants. Burke went to school at Ballitore from 1741 to 1743, when he became a student of Trinity College, Dublin. He stayed there five years, engaged in desultory and violent studies, without a system. He preferred, however, to become a lawyer, and in 1750 he went across to London, and entered the Middle Temple. He was

never called to the Bar, and his neglect of his profession was so scandalous that in 1755 his father withdrew the small allowance on which he lived. Of the events which followed, Burke was never in after years willing to give a detailed account. He "broke all rules, neglected all decorums;" he was "sometimes in London, sometimes in remote parts of the country; sometimes in France, and shortly, please God, to be in America." In 1756, at all events, he married a wife and became an author; this being the date of publication of *A Vindication of Natural Society*, and 1757 of the *Inquiry into the Sublime and Beautiful*. The sources of his livelihood now appear very dim to us, but from 1759 onwards Burke was certainly paid £100 a year to edit *The Annual Register*. At this juncture, too, he found at last a patron in "Single-speech" Hamilton, who employed him as his private secretary in London and Dublin for six years. During this period Burke was lost to literature; "Hamilton took me," he says, "from every pursuit of my literary reputation or of improvement of my fortune." The secretary called his master an infamous scoundrel, and found himself in the street. But a better patron was at hand, and in July 1765 Burke became private secretary to Lord Rockingham, and was returned to the House of Commons in December as M.P. for Wendover. A month later he made his maiden speech, and was complimented by Pitt. He gained, Johnson records, more reputation than any man at his first appearance had ever gained before. After his long obscuration, Burke, at thirty-seven, was successful at last. In 1769, returning to literature, he published his *Observations on the Present State of the Nation*. About the same time he bought the estate of Gregories, near Beaconsfield, in Bucks, and how the man, so lately penniless and still without fortune or office, continued to pay for or to live in such a place is the bewilderment of all biographers. Burke must have secured some source of wealth the nature of which we are unable even to conjecture. The Beaconsfield property had been the seat of the poet Waller; Burke—wherever he got the money—paid £22,000 for it. Mr. John Morley, who has inquired closely into the mystery of Burke's income, has put together a number of possibilities. He is obliged to add "when all these resources have been counted up, we cannot but see the gulf of a great yearly deficit." Unhappily the result is patent; Burke was never henceforth free from heavy debts and anxiety about money. It is said that when Rockingham died in 1782 he ordered that Burke's bonds should be destroyed, and that these alone amounted to £30,000. In the constitutional crisis which culminated in the loss of our American Colonies, Burke took a prominent part both with his voice and with his pen. A whole series of brilliant pamphlets opened in 1770 with the anonymous *Thoughts on the Causes of the Present Discontents;* this was suspected of being written by Junius, who had glared across the night of time in 1769. During Lord North's administration (1770–1782) it has been well said that "Burke's was as the voice of one crying in the wilderness." He kept the Rockingham connection together, he was appointed agent to the Province of New York (1771), he was urged,

**Warren Hastings**

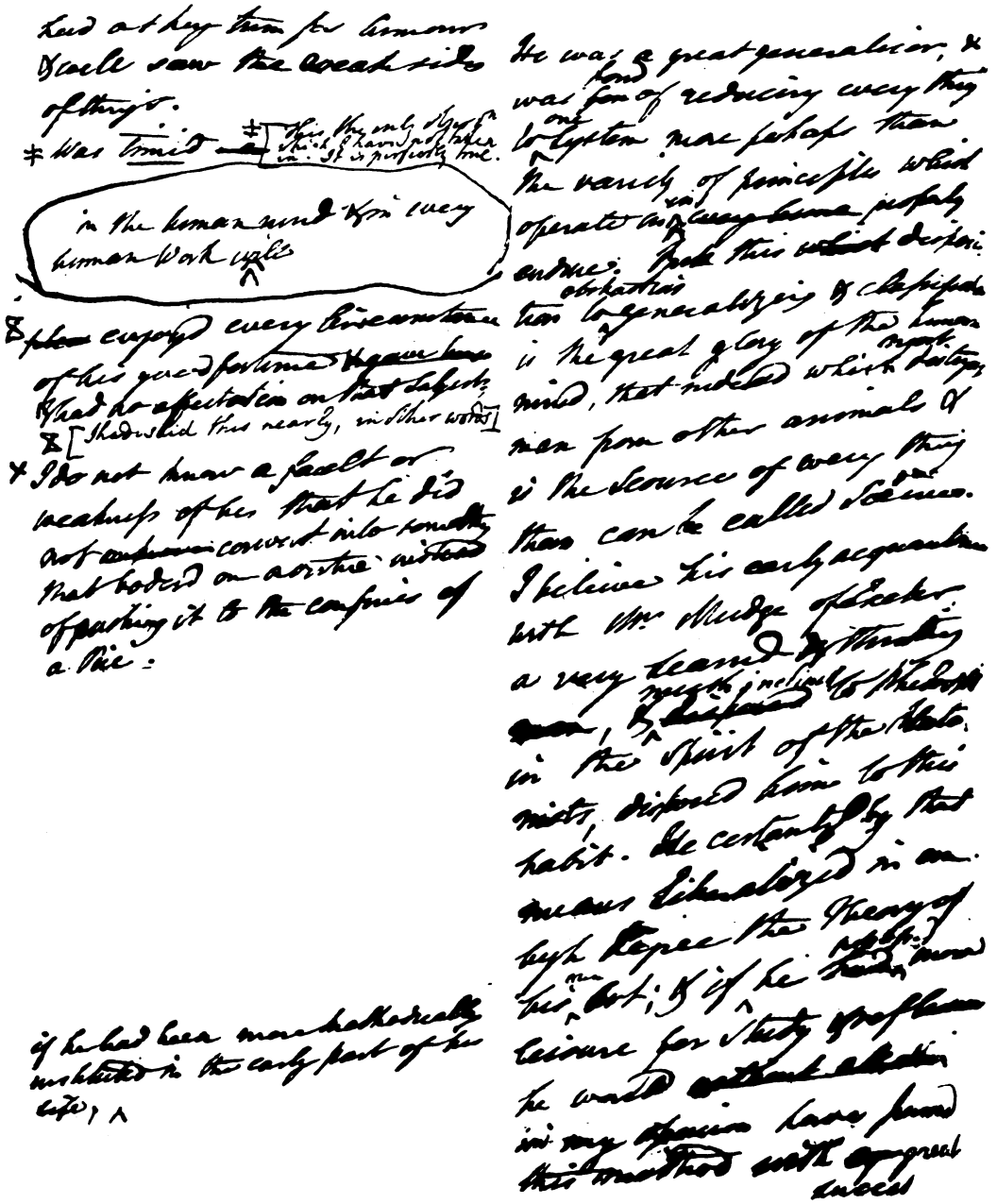
*After a Portrait by Ozias Humphrey*

but in vain, to go out to India to examine into the affairs of the East India Company. In 1773 he took his only son over to Auxerre, in Burgundy, to be educated; he lingered for some time in Paris on his way back, welcomed in society, but with eyes critically open to the momentous signs of the times. After the dissolution of Parliament in 1774, Burke reappeared as M.P. for Malton, a Yorkshire borough, which he returned to represent for the last years of his life, but which he now immediately abandoned in favour of Bristol, where he sat from 1774 to 1780. It is interesting that the only years which Burke spent in Parliament as the member for a genuinely independent borough were those of the gigantic struggle with the American Colonies. On this subject he published three admirable pamphlets, *On American Taxation* (1774), *On Conciliation with America* (1775), and *A Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* (1777). He now turned his thoughts to the amendment of the popular system of economics, and in particular to bringing to an end the shocking corruption of the House of Commons by Ministers and by the Court. In this project and especially in his daring onslaught upon the monstrous waste of the royal household, Burke rose to his height. But he was reminded of the dangers of reform by losing his seat at Bristol, and it was now that he exclaimed "What shadows we are! What shadows we pursue!" In 1782, even when Rockingham came in again, though Burke made part of the ministry, as Pay-master to the Forces, he had no place in the Cabinet, although the party owed their very existence to his loyalty and zeal. After many vicissitudes, which it would be out of place to chronicle here, Burke lost office with the ministers of the Coalition in December 1783 at the final collapse of the Whigs. Once out of place, Burke had time to concentrate his thoughts on a subject which had long attracted them, namely, the notorious abuses of government in India. The recall of Warren Hastings gave him at length his opportunity, and in June 1785 Burke asked a question in the House "respecting the conduct of a gentleman lately returned from India." This was the beginning of his ten years' campaign against that spirit of lawless Indian adventure of which Warren Hastings was the flower and symbol. In May 1787, in consequence of Burke's untiring efforts, Hastings was impeached; in February 1788 he was tried at Westminster; in 1795, in spite of all Burke's eloquence and ardour, he was acquitted. But though the man escaped, the shameful system was doomed; the conscience of the English people was at length awakened. Burke's health suffered from the strain, and after the first trial he went down to Beaconsfield for a needed rest. In 1789 his attention began to be closely drawn to the events of the French Revolution, and in the midst of the general gratulations which first attended that struggle for liberty, Burke gravely doubted and then strenously disapproved. He sat down to the composition of the most carefully executed of all his works, the *Reflections*

**Beaconsfield Church, where Burke is Buried**

EDMUND BURKE,
After the Portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds

*on the Revolution in France*, which appeared very late in 1790, and produced an unparalleled sensation. At the moment of its conception Burke had been extremely



**MS. Note by Burke on Sir Joshua Reynolds**

unpopular; this book made him the darling of the nation. King George III., now quite recovered from his madness, pronounced the *Reflections* to be "a good book, a very good book, a book every gentleman ought to read." Another king, Louis XVI.,

translated it into French with his own hand. Some Whigs in England, however, disapproved and regretted Burke's attitude, and Fox in particular was hostile. It was not, however, until May 1791, that the actual and public rupture took place between these friends so long allied by mutual admiration. Burke published his *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs* in August, and early in 1792 his *Thoughts on French Affairs*, tracts in which his violence was seen steadily rising in volume. He was now so habitually excited by apprehension that Frances Burney, who met him at this time, saw on his face "the expression of a man who is going to defend himself from murderers." How little command of his feelings Burke now possessed is proved by the scene in which he threw a dagger on the floor of the House in December 1792. He announced his intention of leaving Parliament, and in the summer of 1794 he did so, in favour of his only son, Richard. But this darling of his age suddenly died, and Burke lay like an old oak torn up by a hurricane. He was to have been raised to the peerage, as Lord Beaconsfield, but this was now abandoned. The first thing which roused the stricken statesman was the action of the Duke of Bedford in the matter of royal pensions. Burke poured forth the splendid invective of his *Letters to a Noble Lord* (1795), and he passed on to the still more gorgeous rhetoric of his *Thoughts on the Prospect of a Regicide Peace* (1796–7), in four public Letters. To the end he was excited beyond all sobriety of judgment by the mere thought of "that putrid carcass, that mother of all evil—the French Revolution." But he was now dying, and he presently passed away at Beaconsfield on the 9th July 1797, being buried in the parish church. Burke's magnificent gifts of private conversation and of public oratory greatly impressed all the best judges during his own generation, and have remained a tradition ever since.

FROM "A VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY."

There are in Great Britain upwards of a hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines; these unhappy wretches never see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; and here they work at a severe and dismal task without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they have their health miserably impaired and their lives cut short by being perpetually confined in the close vapour of these malignant minerals. A hundred thousand more at least are tortured without remission by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant drudgery necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines. If any man informed us that two hundred thousand innocent persons were condemned to so intolerable slavery, how should we pity the unhappy sufferers, and how great would be our indignation against those who inflicted so cruel and ignominious a punishment!

FROM "THOUGHTS ON A REGICIDE PEACE."

In wishing this nominal peace not to be precipitated, I am sure no man living is less disposed to blame the present Ministry than I am. Some of my oldest friends (and I wish I could say it of more of them) make a part in that Ministry. There are some indeed "whom my dim eyes in vain explore." In my mind a greater calamity could not have fallen on the public than their exclusion. But I drive away that with other melancholy thoughts. As to the distinguished persons to whom my friends who remain are joined, if benefits, nobly and generously conferred, ought to procure good wishes, they are entitled to my best vows: and they have them all. They have administered to me the only consolation I am capable of receiving, which is to know that no individual will suffer by my thirty years' service to the public. If things should give us the comparative happiness of a struggle, I shall be found, I was going to say, fighting (that would be foolish), but dying by the side of Mr. Pitt. I must add that if anything defensive in our domestic system can possibly save us from the disasters of a regicide peace, he is the man to save us. If the

finances in such a case can be repaired, he is the man to repair them. If I should lament any of his acts, it is only when they appear to me to have no resemblance to acts of his. But let him have a confidence in himself which no human abilities can warrant. His abilities are fully equal (and that is to say much for any man) to those that are opposed to him. But if we look to him as our security against the consequences of a regicide peace, let us be assured that a regicide peace and a constitutional Ministry are terms that will not agree. With a regicide peace the King cannot long have a Minister to serve him, nor the Minister a King to serve. If the Great Disposer, in reward of the royal and the private virtues of our Sovereign, should call him from the calamitous spectacles which will attend a state of amity with regicide, his successor will surely see them, unless the same Providence greatly anticipates the course of nature.

Against Burke there wrote the revolutionary rhetoricians, those who saw the colours of dawn, not of sunset, in the blood-red excesses of the French. Richard Price (1723–1791) and Joseph Priestley (1733–1804) were the leaders of this movement in idea; but in style they remained heavy and verbose, handing down the heritage of Locke to Bentham and Godwin. Priestley, after, in 1791, having his house wrecked and his scientific instruments destroyed, as a popular punishment for his sympathy with the Revolution, lived on until 1804 to see something like a justification of his prophecies. These men were the pathetic victims of Burke's splendid indignation, but in 1791 a direct attack on the *Reflections* took up the cudgels in defence. This was the once-famous *Rights of Man*, by Tom Paine (1737–1809), an audacious work, the circulation of which was so enormous that it had a distinct effect in colouring public opinion. A sturdier and more modern writer of the same class was WILLIAM GODWIN, whose *Political Justice* shows a great advance in lucidity and command of logical language. He has been compared, but surely to his own moral advantage, with Condorcet; yet there is no question that he was curiously related to the French precursors of the Revolution, and particularly to Rousseau and Helvetius, from whom he caught, with their republican ardour, not a little of the clear merit of their style.

**William Godwin**

*After the Portrait by John Opie*

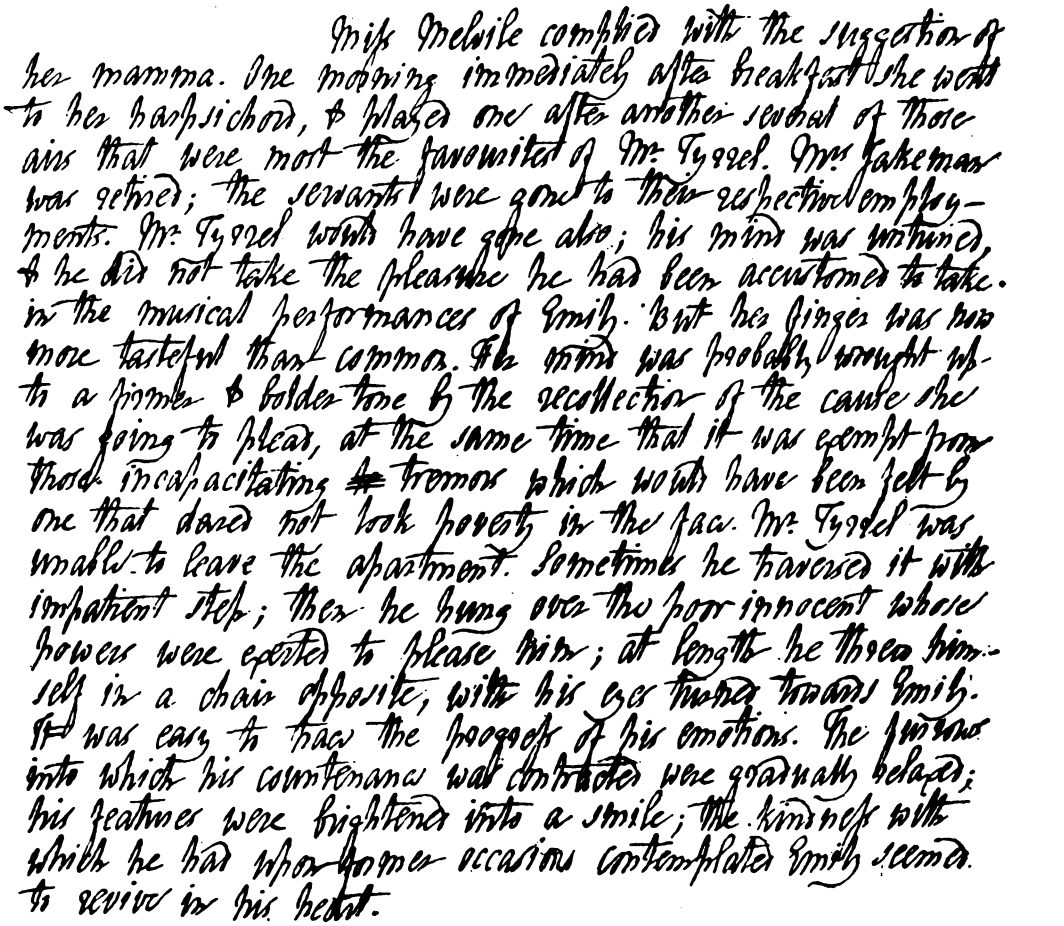
**William Godwin** (1756–1836), who professed to descend from the great Earl Godwin, of the West Saxons, was really the son of a Nonconformist minister at Wisbeach, where he was born on the 3rd of March 1756. In early life he joined the sect of the Sandemanians, and became a preacher amongst them until the year 1783, when his mind became imbued with sceptical ideas, and resigning his ministry he came up to London to live by literature. Ten years later he published his first important work, the *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, which introduced into English society the ideas of the Revolution, and produced a vast sensation. In 1794 this was followed by the powerful novel of *Caleb Williams*. He now formed the acquaintance of **Mary Wollstonecraft** (1759–1797), a woman of high intellect and talent, greatly in advance of her time, who suffered a specious sort of social martyrdom for her Radical ideas, and who has scarcely received her due from posterity. She was the author of *Thoughts on the Education of Daughters*, 1787, and of *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, 1794, the latter dedicated to Talleyrand. Godwin met her when, deserted by a man called Gilbert Imlay, whom she had loved, she was in deep distress, and when she had recently attempted to drown herself by leaping from Putney Bridge. He consoled her, and early in 1797 he persuaded her to marry him. She died five months later after giving birth to a daughter, Mary, afterwards the second wife of Shelley. In 1799 Godwin published a second novel, *St. Leon*, and in 1801 he married again, Mrs. Clairmont, a "very disgusting" widow, who wore green spectacles, and had daughters, one of whom was the Jane Clairmont, afterwards so prominent in the lives of Byron and Shelley. Under the influence of his second wife the moral character of Godwin degenerated. It was in 1811 that he began to know Shelley in conditions only too familiar to us. His financial difficulties culminated in his bankruptcy in 1822. Much in Godwin's later life was sordid and unpleasing, although in 1833 his poverty was relieved by his appointment to be Yeoman Usher of the Exchequer on a small salary. He died in his official residence in New Palace Yard on the 7th of April 1836. It is somewhat difficult to reconcile the squalid anecdotes which have been preserved in regard to Godwin with the enthusiastic respect which was paid him by young men of brilliant gifts from Canning down to Lytton Bulwer. We are less indulgent to him, and we are more inclined to dwell upon "Godwin's house of sordid horror, and Godwin preaching and holding the hat—what a set!" as Matthew Arnold ejaculates.

**Mary Wollstonecraft**
*After the Portrait by J. Opie*

THE CLOSE OF "CALEB WILLIAMS."

I record the praises bestowed on me by Falkland, not because I deserve them, but because they serve to aggravate the baseness of my cruelty. He survived but three days this dreadful scene. I have been his murderer. It was fit that he should praise

my patience, who had fallen a victim, life and fame, to my precipitation! It would have been merciful, in comparison, if I had planted a dagger in his heart. He would have thanked me for my kindness. But atrocious, execrable wretch that I have been, I wantonly inflicted on him an anguish a thousand times worse than death. Meanwhile I endure the penalty of my crime. His figure is ever in imagination before me. Waking or sleeping, I still behold him. He seems mildly to expostulate with me for my unfeeling behaviour. I live the devoted victim of conscious reproach. Alas! I am the



Miss Melvile complied with the suggestion of her mamma. One morning immediately after breakfast she went to her harpsichord, & played one air after another several of those airs that were most the favourites of Mr. Tyrrel. Mrs. Jakeman was retired; the servants were gone to their respective employments. Mr. Tyrrel would have gone also; his mind was unthinned, & he did not take the pleasure he had been accustomed to take in the musical performances of Emily. But her singing was now more tasteful than common. Her mind was probably brought up to a firmer & bolder tone by the recollection of the cause she was going to plead, at the same time that it was exempt from those incapacitating tremors which would have been felt by one that dared not look poverty in the face. Mr. Tyrrel was unable to leave the apartment. Sometimes he traversed it with impatient steps; then he hung over the poor innocent whose powers were exerted to please him; at length he threw himself in a chair opposite, with his eyes fixed towards Emily. It was easy to trace the progress of his emotions. The furrows into which his countenance was contracted were gradually belaid; his features were brightened into a smile; the kindness with which he had upon former occasions contemplated Emily seemed to revive in his heart.

**Extract from the MS. of "Caleb Williams"**

same Caleb Williams that so short a time ago boasted that, however great were the calamities I endured, I was still innocent.

Such has been the result of a project I formed for delivering myself from the evils that had so long attended me. I thought that if Falkland were dead, I should return once again to all that makes life worth possessing. I thought that if the guilt of Falkland were established, fortune and the world would smile upon my efforts. Both these events are accomplished, and it is now only that I am truly miserable.

Why should my reflections perpetually centre upon myself, an overweening regard to which has been the source of my errors! Falkland, I will think only of thee, and from that thought will draw ever fresh nourishment for my sorrows! One generous, one disinterested tear I will consecrate to thy ashes! A nobler spirit lived not among

the sons of men. Thy intellectual powers were truly sublime, and thy bosom burned with a godlike ambition. But of what use are talents and sentiments in the corrupt wilderness of human society! It is a rank and rotten soil, from which every finer shrub draws poison as it grows. All that, in a happier field and a purer air, would expand into virtue and germinate into usefulness, is thus converted into henbane and deadly nightshade.

*Supernatural Fiction*

The spirit of change was everywhere in the air, and it showed itself in the field of diverting literature no less than in that of political controversy. The growth of mediævalism in fiction has been traced back to Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto* (1764), where the supernatural was boldly introduced into pseudo-Gothic romance. This innovation was greatly admired, and presently, having been reinforced by the influence of German neo-mediæval narrative, was copiously imitated. In the last decade of the eighteenth century, Mrs. Radcliffe, M. G. Lewis, and Beckford, presently followed by Maturin, founded what has been called the School of Terror, in the form of romantic novels in which fear was treated as the dominant passion. These "bogey" stories were very widely appreciated, and they served both to free the public mind from the fetters of conventional classic imagery, and to prepare it to receive impressions of enthusiasm and wonder. After having been shut up for more than a hundred years in the cage of a sort of sceptical indifferentism, the nature of man was blinded by the light of liberty, and staggered about bewildered by very strange phenomena. These crude romance-writers had a definite and immediate influence on the poets with whom the beginning of the next chapter will deal, but they also affected the whole future of English prose romance.

**Matthew Gregory Lewis**

*After the Portrait by H. W. Pickersgill*

The Revolutionists created, mainly in order to impress their ideas more easily upon the public, a school of fiction which is interesting as leading in the opposite direction from Mrs. Radcliffe and Maturin, namely, towards the realistic and philosophical novel as we know it to-day. Bage, Hannah More, Holcroft, and even Godwin are not read any longer, and may be considered as having ceased to occupy any prominent position in our literature. But they form a valuable link between Fielding and Smollett on the one hand, and Jane Austen and the modern naturalistic school on the other. When the age was suddenly given over to sliding

panels and echoing vaults, and the touch in the dark of "the mealy and carious bones of a skeleton," these humdrum novelists restored the balance of common-sense and waited for a return to sanity. The most difficult figure to fit in to any progressive scheme of English fiction is FRANCES BURNEY, who was actually alive with Samuel Richardson and with Mr. George Meredith. She wrote seldom, and published at long intervals; her best novels, founded on a judicious study of Marivaux and Rousseau, implanted on a strictly British soil, were produced a little earlier than the moment we have now reached. Yet the *Wanderer* was published simultaneously with *Waverley*. She is a social satirist of a very sprightly order, whose early *Evelina* and *Cecilia* were written with an ease which she afterwards unluckily abandoned for an aping of the pomposity of her favourite lexicographer. Miss Burney was a delightful novelist in her youth, but, unless she influenced Miss Austen, she took no part in the progressive development of English literature.

**Ann Ward** (1764–1823), who became **Mrs. Radcliffe** in 1787, was the author of six or seven hyper-romantic novels, of which *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, 1794, a book of real power and value in spite of its extravagance, is the most famous. After a brief and rather brilliant career as a romance-writer, Mrs. Radcliffe withdrew from literature after publishing *The Italian* in 1797. **Matthew Gregory Lewis** (1775–1818), a prominent figure in the theatrical and social life of his time, was the author of numerous plays, and of the too scandalously famous romance of *The Monk*, published anonymously in 1796. The close of "Monk" Lewis' life was mainly spent in the West Indies; he died at sea on the 14th of May 1818. More than twenty years later the picturesque circumstances of his career were revived by the publication of his *Life and Letters*. A still more singular figure was that of **William Beckford** (1760–1844), whose *Vathek* was published, under circumstances of curious mystery, in English in London, and in French at Paris and Lausanne in 1786–7. Beckford was a man of great wealth and of fantastic eccentricity. He spent an immense fortune upon his estate of Fonthill in Wiltshire, where he had been born on the 1st of October 1760, and where he continued to live, half hermit, half rajah, until in 1822 ruin fell on him and he was obliged to sell the property and the dream-fabric he had piled upon it. Beckford retired to Bath, where he lived until his death on the 2nd of May 1844. **Robert Bage** (1728–1801) and **Thomas Holcroft** (1744–1809) were Quakers by birth who

**William Beckford**

*From a Medallion by P. Sauvage*

became Jacobins by persuasion, and who supported the principles of the French Revolution. Bage's best novel is *Barham Downs* (1784); Holcroft's romances are forgotten, but his tragi-comedy of *The Road to Ruin* (1792) is remarkable as the earliest English melodrama, and his excellent *Memoirs* are still read. Holcroft's life was singularly eventful; he was the son of a London cobbler whose mother "dealt in greens and oysters," and he was brought up to be a pedlar, then a stable-boy, then a jockey, then a strolling actor. It was not until the age of five-and-thirty that he turned his attention, with marked success, to literature. Violent, crabbed, distressingly energetic, a furious democrat, a sour and satirical moral pedant, there was yet something in the independence and simplicity of Holcroft which was very taking. In 1794 he voluntarily surrendered, in company with Horne Tooke, and others, to the charge of high treason, but was discharged. He was the author of four novels and of more than thirty plays. Holcroft died on the 23rd of March 1809. Finally, **Hannah More** (1745–1833), the friend of Johnson, Garrick, Burke, and Reynolds, was a religious and moral writer of extreme popularity, who in 1808 published a very diverting, although didactic novel, *Cælebs in Search of a Wife*. Hannah More, who was one of the best-paid authors of her age, distributed more than one fortune in profuse benefactions, and is among the quaintest and most charming figures of her class in the eighteenth century.

**William Beckford walking in his Estate at Fonthill**

*From a Caricature*

*Fanny Burney*

**Frances Burney**, afterwards **Madame D'Arblay** (1752–1840), was the third child and second daughter of the historian of music, Dr. Charles Burney (1726–1814), and his first wife, Esther Sleepe, a Frenchwoman. She was born at King's Lynn on June 13, 1752. When she was eight years old the family removed to London; her mother died in 1761, and five years later her father married again. She was an odd child, and, when her sisters were carefully educated, she for some reason escaped all schooling; "I was never placed under any governess or instructor whatsoever." On the other hand, from a very early age she was incessantly teaching herself by reading and scribbling, and she enjoyed to the full the advantages of the brilliant social circle in which her father moved, with Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, and the rest. She began her famous diary in 1768. It was long, however, before she could persuade

herself to venture on publicity, and her first novel, *Evelina*, did not appear until 1778, and then anonymously, and with every circumstance of secrecy. When the book was traced to her pen, she received an ovation from her father's friends and from the public; in 1782 she was persuaded to make a second essay, with *Cecilia*, although still anonymously. She was now a celebrity, and was introduced by Mrs. Delany to the King and Queen, both of whom were strongly attracted to her. She was in 1786 offered the appointment of Second Keeper of the Robes to Queen Charlotte, with a salary of £200 a year, a footman, lodgings in the palace, and half the use of a coach. She was averse to accepting the post, which involved tedium and an appalling stiffness of prolonged etiquette, but her friends were dazzled, and they prevailed. Her duties centred around the Queen's snuff-box and her lap-dog, and her relaxation was to preside over the tea-equipage of the gentlemen-in-waiting. After five years of this paralysing bondage, her health broke down under the strain of ennui, and she retired on a small pension. In July 1793 she married General D'Arblay, an emigré artillery officer, then living with Mme. de Staël at Juniper Hall, Dorking. A son was born to her in 1794, and in 1796 she published her third novel, *Camilla*. From 1802 until the death of General D'Arblay in 1818, they lived principally in France and afterwards at Bath. In 1814 she brought out her fourth and last novel, *The Wanderer*. Madame D'Arblay lived into her eighty-eighth year, and having removed from Bath to London, died there on the 6th of January 1840. Her *Diary*, full of gossip of the most amusing kind, and covering a space of more than seventy years, was published in seven volumes between 1842 and 1846. Fanny Burney was not remarkable for

**Thomas Holcroft**

*After the Portrait by John Opie*

**Hannah More**

*After the Portrait by John Opie*

beauty, being rather small, shrewd, and prim, but "with a pleasing expression of countenance and apparently quick feelings," as Sir Walter Scott observed.

FROM MADAME D'ARBLAY'S "DIARY."

The King went up to the table, and looked at a book of prints, from Claude Lorraine, which had been brought down for Miss Dewes; but Mrs. Delany, by mistake, told him they were for me. He turned over a leaf or two, and then said:—

"Pray, does Miss Burney draw too?"

The *too* was pronounced very civilly.

"I believe not, sir," answered Mrs. Delany; "at least she does not tell."

"Oh," cried he, laughing, "that's nothing; she is not apt to tell; she never does tell, you know. Her father told me that himself. He told me the whole history of her *Evelina*. And I shall never forget his face when he spoke of his feelings at first taking up the book; he looked quite frightened, just as if he was doing it that moment. I never can forget his face while I live." Then coming up close to me he said: "But what! what! how was it?"

"Sir," cried I, not well understanding him.

"How came you—how happened it—what—what?"

"I—I only wrote, sir, for my own amusement—only in some idle hours."

**Frances Burney**

*After the Portrait by F. Burney*

"But your publishing—your printing—how was that?"

"That was only, sir—only because——"

I hesitated most abominably, not knowing how to tell him a long story, and growing terribly confused at these questions; besides, to say the truth, his own "what! what!" so reminded me of those vile Probationary Odes, that, in the midst of all my flutter, I was really hardly able to keep my countenance.

The *what!* was then repeated with so earnest a look that, forced to say something, I stammeringly answered: "I thought, sir, it would look very well in print."

I do really flatter myself this is the silliest speech I ever made. I am quite provoked with myself for it: but a fear of laughing made me eager to utter anything, and by no means conscious till I had spoken of what I was saying.

He laughed very heartily himself—well he might—and walked away to enjoy it, crying out: "Very fair indeed; that's being very fair and honest."

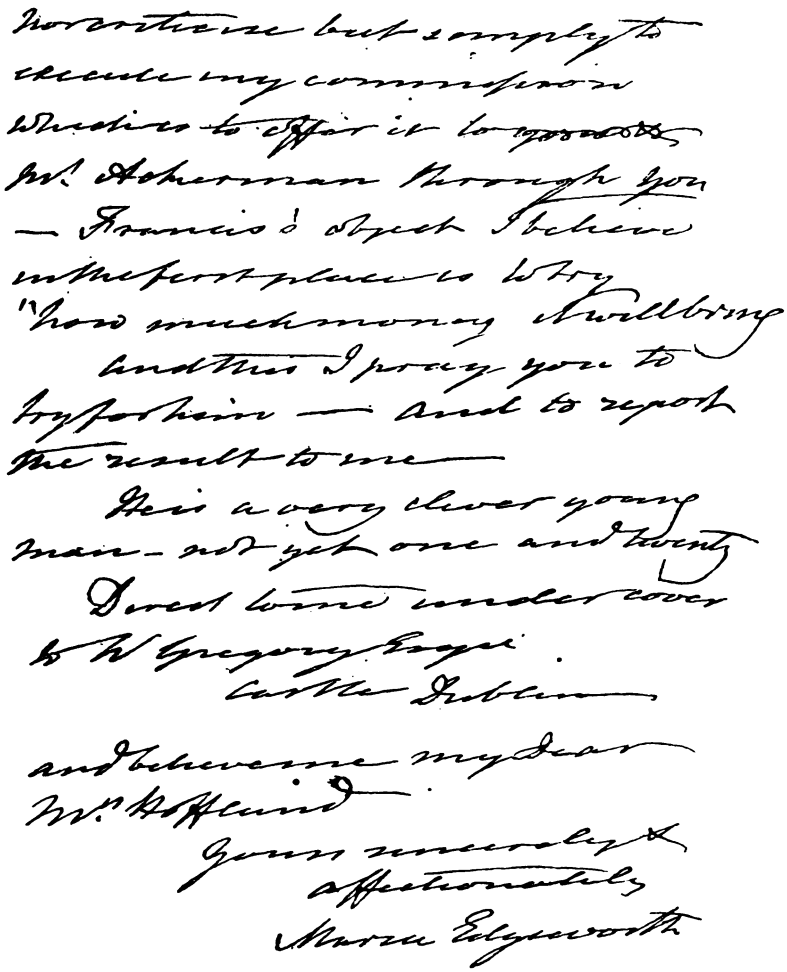
In 1800 MARIA EDGEWORTH opened, with *Castle Rackrent*, the long series of her popular, moral, and fashionable tales. Their local colouring and dis-

tinctively Irish character made them noticeable; but even the warm praise of Scott and the more durable value of her stories for children have not prevented Miss Edgeworth from becoming obsolete. She prepares the way for the one prose-writer of this period whose genius has proved absolutely perdurable, who holds no lower a place in her own class than is held in theirs by Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Scott—for that impeccable JANE AUSTEN, whose fame becomes every day more inaccessible to the devastating forces of time and shifting fashion. It has long been seen, it was noted even by Macaulay, that the only writer with whom Jane Austen can fairly be compared is Shakespeare. It is obvious that she has nothing of his width of range or sublimity of imagination; she keeps herself to that two-inch square of ivory of which she spoke in her proud and simple way. But there is no other English writer who possesses so much of Shakespeare's inevitability, or who produces such evidence of a like omniscience. Like Balzac, like Tourgenieff at his best, Jane Austen gives the reader an impression of knowing everything there was to know about her creations, of being incapable of error as to their acts, thoughts, or emotions. She presents an absolute illusion of reality; she exhibits an art so consummate that we mistake it for nature. She never mixes her own temperament with those of her characters, she is never swayed by them, she never loses for a moment her perfect, serene control of them. Among the creators of the world, Jane Austen takes a place that is with the highest and that is purely her own.

**Jane Austen as a Girl**

The dates of publication of Miss Austen's novels are misleading if we wish to discover her exact place in the evolution of English literature. Astounding as it appears to-day, these incomparable books were refused by publishers

from whose shops deciduous trash was pouring week by week. The vulgar novelists of the Minerva Press, the unspeakable Musgraves and Roches and Rosa Matildas, sold their incredible romances in thousands, while *Pride and Prejudice* went a-begging in MS. for nearly twenty years. In point of fact the six immortal books were written between 1796 and 1810, although their



**Extract from a Letter from Maria Edgeworth to Mrs. Hoffland**

dates of issue range from 1811 to 1818. In her time of composition, then, she is found to be exactly the contemporary of Wordsworth and Coleridge in their reform of poetry, instead of impinging on the career of Sir Walter Scott as a romance-writer. Her methods, however, in no degree resemble those of the poets, and she has no conscious lesson of renaissance to teach. She does not share their interest in landscape; with her the scenery is a mere accessory. If she is with them at all, it is in her minute adherence to truth, in her instinctive abhorrence of anything approaching rhetoric, in her

minute observation and literary employment of the detail of daily life. It is difficult to say that she was influenced by any predecessor, and, most unfortunately, of the history of her mind we know almost nothing. Her reserve was great, and she died before she had become an object of curiosity even to her friends. But we see that she is of the race of Richardson and Marivaux although she leaves their clumsy construction far behind. She was a satirist, however, not a sentimentalist. One of the few anecdotes preserved about her relates that she refused to meet Madame de Staël, and the Germanic spirit was evidently as foreign to her taste as the lyricism born of Rousseau. She was the exact opposite of all which the cosmopolitan critics of Europe were deciding that English prose fiction was and always would be. Lucid, gay, penetrating, exquisite, Jane Austen possessed precisely the qualities that English fiction needed to drag it out of the Slough of Despond and start it wholesomely on a new and vigorous career.

**Maria Edgeworth** (1767–1849) was the daughter of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, an eccentric Irish gentleman of good family, and of the second of his five wives (if we recognise the freak of his boyish matrimony). She was born at Black Bourton, Oxfordshire, in the house of her mother's father, a German, on the 1st of January 1767. She was put to school at Derby in 1775. It was noticed quite early that she had an extraordinary gift for story-telling, and at the age of thirteen she was urged by her father to begin the composition of tales. During an illness, she came much under the influence of the humanitarian, Thomas Day (1748–1789), the author of the didactic novel, *Sandford and Merton* (1783–9); but in 1782 Mr. Edgeworth, now already, at thirty-eight, the husband of a fourth wife, took his complex family over to Ireland, and settled on his estates at Edgeworthstown in County Longford. This was Maria's home during the remainder of her long life. After publishing *Letters to Literary Ladies* in 1795, her real work began with her

**Maria Edgeworth**

*From a Drawing by Joseph Slater*

first novel, *Castle Rackrent*, published in 1800. This is perhaps the best of her writings, because the least interfered with; most of her books had to undergo the revision and general tinkering of her conceited and pedantic father. *Belinda* followed in 1801, and *Irish Bulls* in 1802. Their success made her famous not in this country alone, but on the Continent, and when the Edgeworths went to Paris in 1802–3 they found the best society eagerly opened to them. Occasional visits to London, Paris, Switzerland, and Scotland were the diversions of the remainder of her life, mainly spent in her Irish home. In so quiet an existence, the arrival of Sir Walter Scott, as a guest at Edgeworthstown in 1825, formed an epoch. She published two series of *Fashionable Tales*, 1809–12, of a didactic and hortatory nature, which were eagerly read by her large public. Towards the end of her life she gave herself to practical philanthropy, and in spite of her great age was untiring throughout the famine of 1846. She died at Edgeworthstown, after a few hours' illness, on the 22nd of May 1849. Byron's description of Maria Edgeworth could not be improved: "She was (in 1813) a nice little unassuming 'Jeanie Deans'-looking body,' and if not handsome, certainly not ill-looking; her conversation was as quiet as herself—one would never have guessed she could write her name."

Steventon Parsonage, the Birthplace of Jane Austen

**Jane Austen** (1775–1817) was the seventh child and second daughter of the Rev. George Austen, rector of Deane and Steventon. She was born in the parsonage of the latter village, half-way between the towns of Whitchurch and Basington in Hampshire, on the 16th of December 1775. Her mother's name was Cassandra Leigh, a witty member of a family of wits. Jane and her elder sister, another Cassandra, were educated at home. Nothing could exceed the quietness of her existence, which was, however, cheerful, easy, and surrounded by mirth and affection. At a very early age she began to write "stories of a slight and flimsy texture, intended to be nonsensical." This was followed by a period of burlesque imitation of the extravagant romances of the day. The earliest of her writings which we possess is the short tale, in letters, called *Lady Susan*, written when she was about seventeen. A novel called *Elinor and Marianne* has not survived, but is understood to have been a first sketch for *Sense and Sensibility*. Finally, when in her twenty-first year she began *Pride and Prejudice*, which she finished in August 1797, *Sense and Sensibility*, as we now know, immediately followed, and *Northanger Abbey* belongs to 1798. But none of these admirable books was at that time published. *Pride and Prejudice* was offered to a publisher of novels, who refused even to look at it, while *Northanger Abbey* was bought for £10 by a bookseller at Bath, who locked it up in a drawer and forgot it. Jane Austen seems to have taken her disappointment—which is one of the most extraordinary in the history

of literature—with perfect composure, but she ceased to write. In May 1801 her father resigned his livings to his son, and moved into Bath, where for nearly four years the Austens lived at 4 Sydney Place. There is very little evidence of the novelist's state of mind or of her occupations during these years; we only know that she wrote nothing at Bath, except the fragment called *The Watsons*. After the death of her father, in 1805, she went to Southampton, where she, her mother, and her sister occupied "a commodious, old-fashioned house in a corner of Castle Square." Four more years passed in silence, and it was not until they went to live at Chawton Cottage, a little house about a mile from Alton, and close to the parish of her birth, that Jane Austen's faculty revived. In 1811, at the age of thirty-six, she made her first appearance as an author, with her old *Sense and Sensibility*, for which she was now paid £150. While this book was going through the press, she was writing a new one, *Mansfield Park*, which she does not seem to have finished until 1814. Meanwhile *Pride and Prejudice* had at last been published. *Mansfield Park* followed, and Jane Austen was now actively employed in the composition of *Emma*, which appeared in the winter of 1815. This was made the occasion for an article on Miss Austen's novels, now four in number, in the *Quarterly Review*, an article which did more than anything else to lift her name into celebrity, and which it has only lately (1898) been discovered was written by no less celebrated a reviewer than Sir Walter Scott. Amusingly enough, Jane Austen records, just about this time, that she too is writing "a critique on Walter Scott;" but these two illustrious persons never came into any personal relation. In 1815 Miss

**The Parlour in Chawton Cottage, with Jane Austen's Desk**

Austen's health began to fail, but she continued to write, and *Persuasion* is the work of the last year of her life. In the summer of 1817 she was so ill, that she was persuaded to go to Winchester for medical advice; the sisters took lodgings then in College Street. There Jane died on the 18th of July 1817, and six days later was buried in Winchester Cathedral. Jane Austen had a vivacious face, with brilliant eyes and hair; her "whole appearance expressed health and animation." She had no literary affectations; her novels were written and revised at a small mahogany desk in the general sitting-room at Chawton, a covering being merely thrown over the MS. if a visitor called. No critical phrase expresses the character of her apparatus so fully as her own famous one of "the little bit (two inches wide) of ivory." She liked the best authors of her day, and in particular Crabbe, with whose genius her own had an obvious affinity. She is recorded to have said in joke, "that if she ever married, she could fancy being Mrs. Crabbe." No love-affair less Platonic than this is believed to have disturbed her heart.

**House in College Street, Winchester, where Jane Austen died**

FROM "EMMA."

A very little quiet reflection was enough to satisfy Emma as to the nature of her agitation on hearing this news of Frank Churchill. She was soon convinced that it was not for herself she was feeling at all apprehensive or embarrassed—it was for him. Her own attachment had really subsided into a mere nothing—it was not worth thinking of; but if he, who had undoubtedly been always so much the most in love of the two, were to

I can return the compliment, by thanking you for the unexpected pleasure of your Letter yesterday, & as I like unexpected pleasure it made me very happy; And indeed, you need not apologize for your Letter in any respect, for it is all very fine, but not too fine. I hope to be written again, or something like it. — I think Edward will not suffer much longer from heat; by the look of things this morng. I suspect the weather is rising into the balsamic Northeast. — It has been hot here, as you may suppose, since it was so hot with you, but I have not suffered from it at all, nor felt it in such a degree as to make me imagine it would be anything in the Country. Everybody has talked of the heat, but I set it all down to London. — I give you joy of our new Nephew, & hope if he ever comes to be hanged, it will not be till we are too old to care about it. — It is a great comfort to have it so safely & speedily over. The Miss Curlings must be hard worked in writing so many Letters, but the novelty of it may recommend it to them; — mine was from Miss Elia, & she says that my Brother may arrive today. — No indeed, I am never too busy to think of S & S I can no more forget it, than a mother can forget her sucking child; & I am much obliged to you for your enquiries. I have had two sheets to correct, but the last only brings us to W.'s first appearance. Mrs K. regrets in the most flattering manner that she must wait till May, but I have scarcely a hope of it's being out in June. — Henry does not neglect it; he has hurried the Printer, & says he will see him again today. — It will not stand still during his absence

be returning with the same warmth of sentiment which he had taken away, it would be very distressing. If a separation of two months should not have cooled him, there were dangers and evils before her; caution for him and for herself would be necessary. She did not mean to have her own affections entangled again, and it would be incumbent on her to avoid any encouragement of his.

She wished she might be able to keep him from an absolute declaration. That would be so very painful a conclusion of their present acquaintance; and yet, she could not help rather anticipating something decisive. She felt as if the spring would not pass without bringing a crisis, an event, a something to alter her present composed and tranquil state. It was not very long, though rather longer than Mr. Weston had foreseen, before she had the power of forming some opinion of Frank Churchill's feelings. The Enscombe family were not in town quite so soon as had been imagined, but he was at Highbury very soon afterwards. He rode down for a couple of hours; he could not yet do more; but as he came from Randalls immediately to Hartfield, she could then exercise all her quick observation, and speedily determine how he was influenced, and how she must act. They met with the utmost friendliness. There could be no doubt of his great pleasure in seeing her. But she had an almost instant doubt of his caring for her as he had done, of his feeling the same tenderness in the same degree. She watched him well. It was a clear thing he was less in love than he had been. Absence, with the conviction probably of her indifference, had produced this very natural and very desirable effect.

*The Reviews*

One curious result of the revolution in literary taste was the creation of an official criticism mainly intended to resist the new ideas, and, if possible, to rout them. The foundation of the *Edinburgh Review* in 1802 is a remarkable landmark in the history of English literature. The proposition that a literary journal should be started which should take the place of the colourless *Monthly Review* was made by Sydney Smith, but FRANCIS JEFFREY, a young Scotch advocate, was editor from the first, and held the post for six-and-twenty years. He was a half-hearted supporter of the Scoto-Teutonic reformers, but a vehement opponent, first of Coleridge and afterwards of Shelley. It is, however, to be put to his credit that he recognised the genius of both Wordsworth and Keats, in a manner not wholly unsympathetic; his strictures on *The Excursion* were severe, but there was good sense in them. The finer raptures of poetry, however, were not revealed to Jeffrey, and in the criticism of their contemporaries he and his staff were often

**Francis, Lord Jeffrey**

*After the Bust by Patrick Park*

guilty of extraordinary levity. Yet, on the whole, and where the prejudices of the young reviewers were not involved, the *Edinburgh* did good work, and it created quite a new standard of merit in periodical writing. To counteract its Whiggishness the Ministerial party founded in 1809 the Tory *Quarterly Review*, and put that bitter pedant and obscurantist, William Gifford, in the editorial chair. This periodical also enjoyed a great success without injuring its rival, which latter, at the close of the period with which we are dealing, had reached the summit of its popularity and a circulation in those days quite unparalleled. Readers of the early numbers of the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* will to-day be surprised at the emotion they caused and the power they wielded. They are often smart, sometimes witty, rarely sound, and the style is, as a rule, pompous and diffuse. The modern reader is irritated by the haughty assumption of these boyish reviewers, who treat genius as a prisoner at the bar, and as in all probability a guilty prisoner. The *Quarterly* was in this respect a worse sinner even than the *Edinburgh*; if Jeffrey worried the authors, Gifford positively bit them. This unjust judging of literature, and particularly of poetry—what is called the "slashing" style of criticism—when it is now revived, is usually still prosecuted on the lines laid down by Jeffrey and Gifford. It gives satisfaction to the reviewer, pain to the author, and a faint amusement to the public. It has no effect whatever on the ultimate position of the book reviewed, but, exercised on occasion, it is doubtless a useful counter-irritant to thoughtless or venal eulogy. If so, let the credit be given to the venerable Blue-and-yellow and Brown *Reviews*.

**Sydney Smith**

*After the Portrait by Sir G. Hayter*

**Francis Jeffrey, Lord Jeffrey** (1773–1850), was son of a depute-clerk in the Supreme Court of Scotland, and was born in Edinburgh on the 23rd of October 1773. He was educated at the High School in Edinburgh and at the Universities of Glasgow

and Oxford. When the *Edinburgh Review* was founded in 1802, Jeffrey was settled in practice in his native city. He was invited to conduct the *Review*, and he continued to be the editor until 1829, when he was appointed Dean of the Faculty of Advocates, and resigned the *Review* into the hands of **Macvey Napier** (1777–1847). Jeffrey was made Lord Advocate of Scotland in 1830, but the labour of politics—for the post involved attendance in Parliament—was irksome to him. He was still M.P. for Edinburgh, however, when in 1834 he was made a judge of the Court of Session, with the title of Lord Jeffrey. His health began to fail in 1841, but he continued to perform his duties on the bench until a few days before his death, which occurred at Edinburgh on the 26th of January 1850. Jeffrey exercised a sort of dictatorship in English criticism during a period of great importance for our literature, but posterity has reversed the majority of his *obiter dicta*. He had fine social gifts, and filled a very important position in Edinburgh, when that city was still a centre of hospitality and cultivation. He collected his scattered writings in four volumes in 1844, but already those who had been astonished at his essays when they appeared anonymously discovered that much of the splendour had departed. Those who turn to his volumes to-day will probably say of them, as Jeffrey himself had the temerity to exclaim of *The Excursion*, "This will never do!" But he was a man of light and even of leading in his day, and did his honest best to put an extinguisher on the later lights of letters.

**William Cobbett**

*Engraved by William Ward after a Portrait by J. R. Smith*

The **Rev. Sydney Smith** (1771–1845) was the second of the four sons of a gentleman at Woodford, Essex, where he was born on the 3rd of June 1771. His father had been a spendthrift, but he contrived to give his children a sound education, and Sydney went to Winchester and to New College, Oxford. From 1794 to 1797 he was a curate in Wiltshire, and afterwards a tutor in Edinburgh, but he suffered much from poverty, until the production of the *Edinburgh Review* supplied him with regular literary employment. He moved to London in 1803, and in 1806 he got at last a

living, the rectory of Foston-le-Clay, in Yorkshire. At this time he was discharging his clerical duties (at Foston-le-Clay) by deputy, and writing his brilliant Peter Plymley letters (1807–8). Later on he exchanged Foston for the beautiful rectory of Combe Florey, in Somerset, where he loved to entertain his friends. In 1831 he was made a canon residentiary of St. Paul's. In his grand climacteric, 1839, as he said, he became by the death of a relative "unexpectedly a rich man." He died in London on the 22nd of February 1845. Sydney Smith was pre-eminently witty both in writing and in speech, a droll and delightful companion, a perfectly honest man, and a genuine lover of liberty and truth.

**Jeremy Bentham**
*After the Portrait by W. Derby*

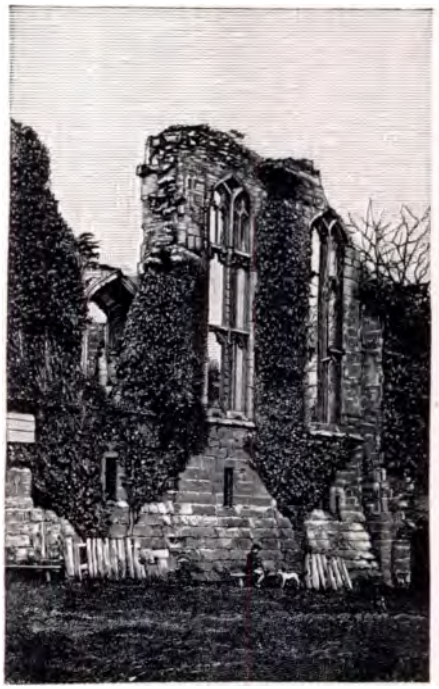
*Minor Prose Writers*

A book which is little regarded to-day exercised so wide and so beneficial an influence on critical thought at the beginning of the century that it seems imperative to mention it here. The *Curiosities of Literature*, by Isaac D'Israeli, was not a masterpiece, but its storehouses of anecdote and cultivated reflection must have familiarised with the outlines of literary history thousands who would have been repelled by a more formal work. We dare not speak here at any length of Cobbett and Combe, of Bentham and Dugald Stewart, of Horner and Mackintosh and Mary Wollstonecraft. Of all these writers, in their various ways, it may safely be said that their ideas were of more importance than their style, and that, interesting as they may severally be, they do not illustrate the evolution of English literature.

**Isaac Disraeli**
*After the Portrait by Denning*

**William Cobbett** (1762–1835) was born at Farnham. He was originally a farm labourer, then (1783) an attorney's clerk in London. From 1784 to 1791 he served as a private soldier in Nova Scotia. Under the pseudonym of Peter Porcupine, he became a mordant satiric pamphleteer. He is best remembered now by his *Rural Rides* (1830). He was an excessively prolific occasional writer. **William Combe** (1741–1823) is famous as the

author of *The Tour of Dr. Syntax in Search of the Picturesque* (1812–21), and of a daring forgery, *Lord Lyttelton's Letters* (1782). The great champion of pure utilitarianism, **Jeremy Bentham** (1748–1832), was the son of a solicitor in Houndsditch. He was excessively precocious, and known as "the philosopher" at the age of thirteen. He invented, or first made general, the formula of "the greatest happiness of the greatest number." The uncouthness of Bentham's style did injustice to his learning and to the freshness of his mind. He bequeathed his body to be dissected and preserved in University College, where it may still be seen, dressed in the last suit of clothes which Bentham had made for him. Another octogenarian was **Isaac Disraeli** (1766–1848), best known as the father of Lord Beaconsfield. He came of a family of Venetian Jews who settled in England about twenty years before the birth of Isaac; and he was educated in Amsterdam. He made the by-paths of literary history the subject of his life's study, and he wrote two anecdotal miscellanies which are still among our minor classics, *Curiosities of Literature*, 1791–1834, and *The Calamities and Quarrels of Authors*, 1812–14. His life was serene and his temper placid, "and amid joy or sorrow, the philosophic vein was ever evident." **Sir James Mackintosh** (1765–1832) was an ambitious but upright public man, whose legal and political responsibilities—he lived to be Commissioner of the Board of Control—left him leisure for considerable literary activity, the results of which were mainly not given to the public until several years after his death. **Dugald Stewart** (1753–1828) was the principal metaphysician of his time, a disciple of Reid and commentator on his philosophy. He was a brilliant lecturer and a graceful writer: he was considered the finest didactic orator of his age.



**Ruins of Kenilworth Castle**

*Scott's Novels*

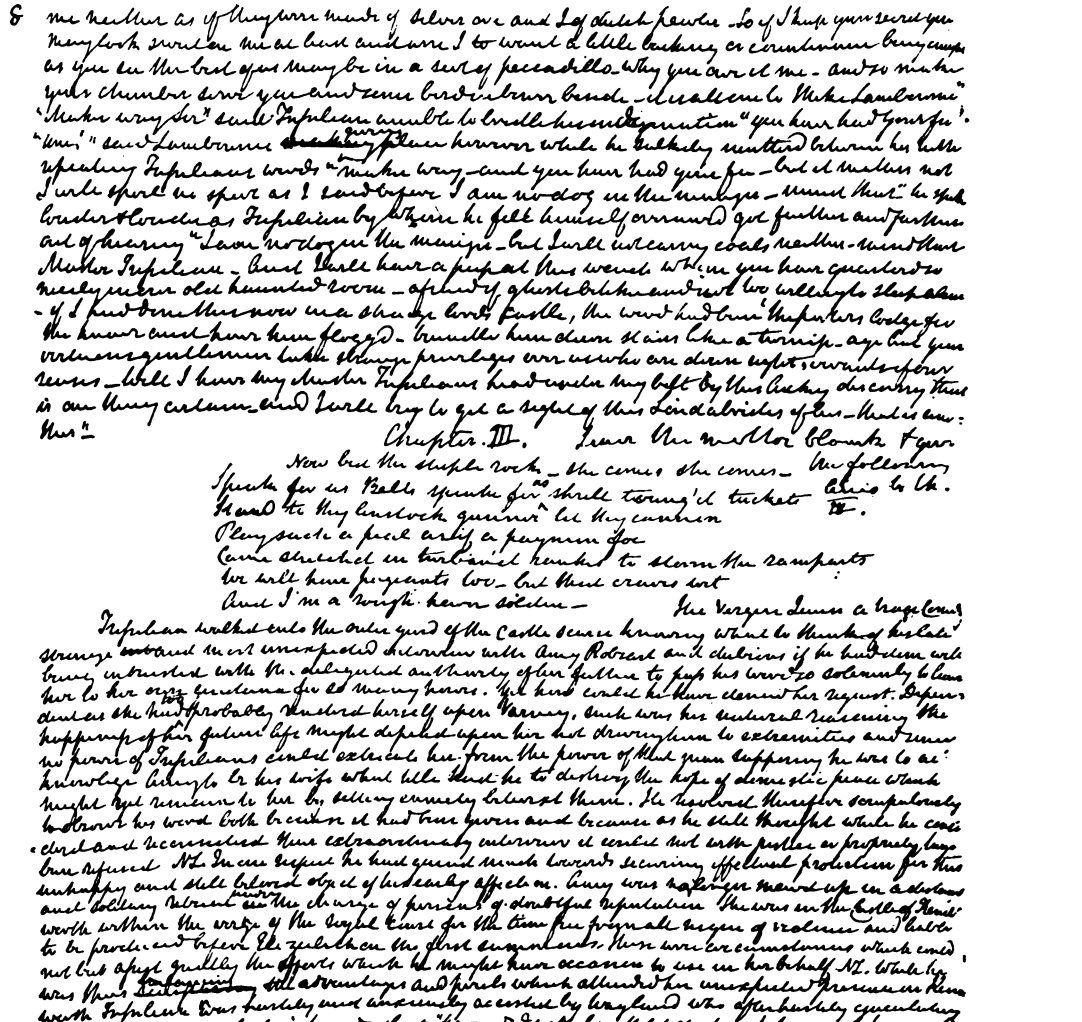
During the later years of this period romantic fiction fell into great decay. Out of its ashes sprang the historical novel, the invention of which was boldly claimed by Miss Jane Porter (1776–1850), whose *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, 1803, long cherished by our great-grandfathers, and not entirely unknown to our fathers, had some faint merit. Other ladies, with the courage of their sex, but with remarkably little knowledge of the subject, attacked the muse of history. But nothing was really done of importance until Sir WALTER SCOTT turned his attention from poetry to prose romance. *Waverley* was not published till 1814, and the long series of novels really belong to the subsequent chapter. They had, however, long been prepared for, and it will be convenient to consider them here. Scott had written a fragment

of an historical novel (afterwards *Waverley*) in 1805, and in 1808 he had taken up the useful task of preparing for the press an antiquarian story by Strutt, called *Queenhoo Hall*. His long poems of the same decade had necessitated the approach to historical study in a romantic and yet human spirit. From his earliest years Scott had been laying up, from Scottish and from German sources, impressions which were to be definitely useful to him in the creation of his great novels. At last, in the maturity of forty-three years, he began the gigantic work which he was not to abandon until his death in 1832.

**Sir Walter Scott**

*From a Sketch by Sir Edwin Landseer*

It is difficult to speak of the novels of Sir Walter Scott in a perfectly critical spirit. They are a cherished part of the heritage of the English-speaking race, and in discussing them we cannot bring ourselves to use regarding them anything but what to foreign critics seems the language of hyperbole. The noble geniality of attitude which they discover in the author, their perennial freshness, their variety, their "magnificent train of events," make us impatient of the briefest reference to their shortcomings in execution. But it is, perhaps, not the highest loyalty to Scott to attempt to deny that his great books have patent faults: that the conduct of the story in *Rob Roy* is primitive, that the heroines of *Ivanhoe* are drawn with no psychological subtlety, that there is a great deal that is terribly heavy and unexhilarating in the pages of *Peveril of the Peak*. It is best, surely, to admit all this, to allow that Scott sometimes wrote too rapidly and too loosely, that his antiquarianism sometimes ran away with him, that his



Page of the MS. of "Kenilworth"

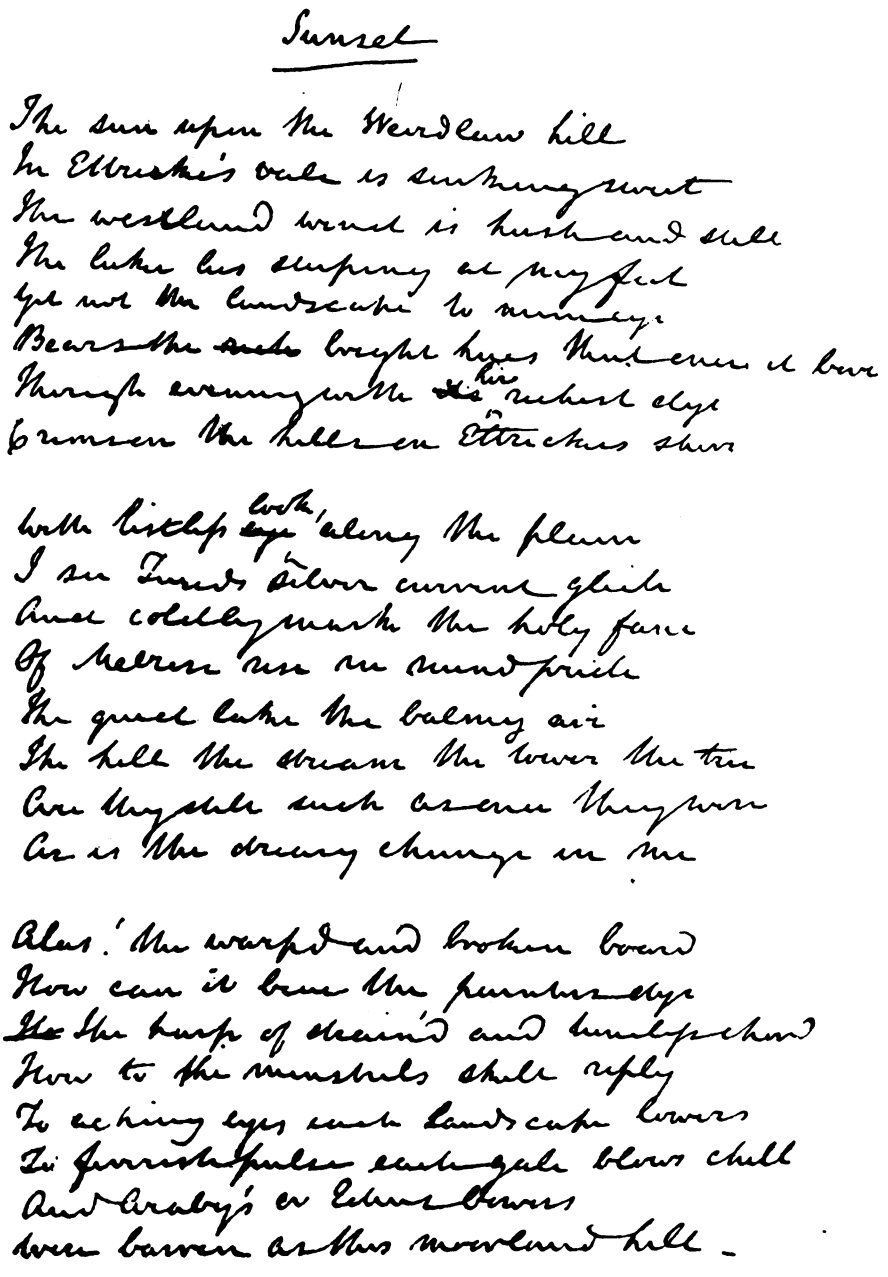
pictures of mediæval manners are not always quite convincing. He has not the inevitable perfection of Jane Austen; he makes no effort to present himself to us as so fine an artist.

When this is admitted, let the enemy make the best they can of it. We may challenge the literatures of the world to produce a purer talent, or a writer who has with a more brilliant and sustained vivacity combined the novel with the romance, the tale of manners with the tale of wonder. Scott's early ideal was Fielding, and he began the *Waverley* series in rivalry with *Tom Jones*, but he soon left his master. If Scott has not quite the intense sympathy with humanity, nor quite the warm blood of Fielding, he

**Original Sketch by Cruikshank for "Meg Merrilies"**

has resources which the earlier novelist never dreamed of. His design was to please the modern world by presenting a tale of the Middle Ages, and to do this he had to combat a wide ignorance of and lack of sympathy with history; to create, without a model, homely as well as histrionic scenes of ancient life; to enliven and push on the narrative by incessant contrasts, high with low, tragic with facetious, philosophical with adventurous. His first idea was, to dwell as exclusively as possible with Scottish chivalry. But *Guy Mannering*, once severely judged by the very admirers of Scott, now esteemed as one of his best books, showed what genius for humorous portraiture was possessed by the creator of Dandie Dinmont and Dominie Sampson; while the *Antiquary*, in its pictures of seaside life in a fishing-town of Scotland, showed how close and how vivid was to be his observation of rustic society.

In all the glorious series there are but two which a lover of Scott would wish away. It is needless to mention them; their very names recall to us


Sunset

The sun upon the Weirdlaw hill
In Ettrick's vale is sinking sweet
The westland wind is hush and still
The lake lies sleeping at my feet
Yet not the landscape to mine eye
Bears the rude beauty that erewhile it bore
Though evening with her richest dye
Empurples Cauldshiels loch and shore

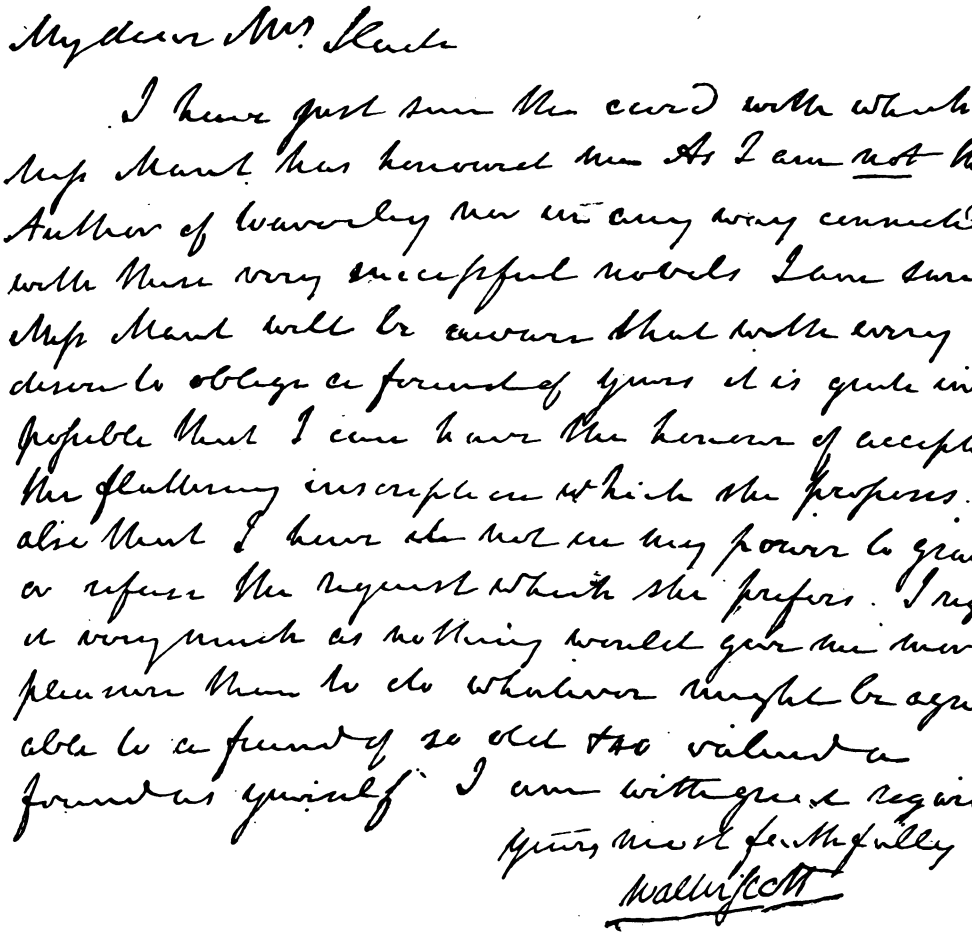
Where Bitchop-cleuch[1] o'erlooks the plain
I see Tweed's silver current glide
And coldly mark the holy fane
Of Melrose rise in ruined pride
The quiet lake the balmy air
The hill the stream the tower the tree
Are they still such as once they were
Or is the dreary change in me

Alas! the warped and broken board
How can it bear the painter's dye
The harp of strained and tuneless chord
How to the minstrel shall reply
To aching eyes each landscape lowers
To feverish pulse each gale blows chill
And Araby's or Eden's bowers
Seem barren as this moorland hill

Facsimile of MS. Verses of Scott

that honourable tragedy of over-strain, of excessive imaginative labour, which bowed his head at length to the ground. The life of Scott, with its

*splendeurs et misères*—the former so hospitably shared, the latter so heroically borne—forms a romance as thrilling as any of his fictions, and one necessary to our perfect comprehension of his labours. Great as had been the vogue of his poems, it was far exceeded by that of his novels, and when Scott died his was doubtless the strongest naturalistic influence then being exercised in Europe. All the romances of Alexandre Dumas and Victor Hugo sprang



My dear Mrs. Slade

I have just seen the card with which Miss Mant has honoured me As I am not the Author of Waverley nor in any way connected with those very successful novels I am sure Miss Mant will be aware that with every desire to oblige a friend of yours it is quite impossible that I can have the honour of accepting the flattering inscription which she proposes & also that I have also not in my power to grant or refuse the request which she prefers. I regret it very much as nothing would give me more pleasure than to do whatever might be agreeable to a friend of so old & valued a standing as yourself I am with great regard

Yours most faithfully

Walter Scott

**Facsimile Letter from Scott to Mrs. Slade denying the authorship of "Waverley"**

directly from him; he had inspired Fouqué in Germany, Manzoni in Italy, and Fernan Caballero in Spain. Wherever historical fiction of a picturesque and chivalrous order was produced, it bore the stamp of Walter Scott upon its margin. Nor with the decline of the imitations is it found that the original ceases to retain its hold on the interest of the English race.

BLOODHOUNDS.

The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and his friends with bloodhounds and bugle-horn, and was called the *hot-trod*. He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom; a privilege

which often occasioned bloodshed. In addition to what has been said of the bloodhound, I may add, that the breed was kept up by the Buccleuch family on their Border estates till within the eighteenth century. A person was alive in the memory of man, who remembered a bloodhound being kept at Eldinhope, in Ettricke Forest, for whose maintenance the tenant had an allowance of meal. At the time the sheep were always watched at night. Upon one occasion, when the duty had fallen on the narrator, then a lad, he became exhausted with fatigue, and fell asleep upon a bank near sunrising. Suddenly he was awakened by the tread of horses, and saw five men, well mounted and armed, ride briskly over the edge of the hill. They stopped and looked at the flock ; but the day was too far broken to admit the chance of their carrying any of them off. One of them, in spite, leaped from his horse, and, coming to the shepherd, seized him by the belt he wore round his waist ; and, setting his foot upon his body, pulled it till it broke, and carried it away with him. They rode off at the gallop; and, the shepherd giving the alarm, the bloodhound was turned loose, and the people in the neighbourhood alarmed. The marauders, however, escaped, notwithstanding a sharp pursuit. This circumstance serves to show how very long the license of the Borderers continued in some degree to manifest itself.

HUMANITY OF BRITISH SOLDIERS.

Even the unexampled gallantry of the British army in the campaign of 1810–11, although they never fought but to conquer, will do them less honour in history than their humanity, attentive to soften to the utmost of their power the horrors which war, in its mildest aspect, must always inflict upon the defenceless inhabitants of the country in which it is waged, and which, on this occasion, were tenfold augmented by the barbarous cruelties of the French. Soup-kitchens were established by subscription among the officers, wherever the troops were quartered for any length of time. The commissaries contributed the heads, feet, &c., of the cattle slaughtered for the soldiery : rice, vegetables, and bread, where it could be had, were purchased by the officers. Fifty or sixty starving peasants were daily fed at one of these regimental establishments, and carried home the relics to their famished households. The emaciated wretches, who could not crawl from weakness, were speedily employed in pruning their vines. While pursuing Massena, the soldiers evinced the same spirit of humanity, and in many instances, when reduced themselves to short allowance, from having outmarched their supplies, they shared their pittance with the starving inhabitants, who had ventured back to view the ruins of their habitations, burnt by the retreating enemy, and to bury the bodies of their relations whom they had butchered. Is it possible to know such facts without feeling a sort of confidence, that those who so well deserve victory are most likely to attain it?—It is not the least of Lord Wellington's military merits, that the slightest disposition towards marauding meets immediate punishment. Independently of all moral obligation, the army which is most orderly in a friendly country, has always proved most formidable to an armed enemy.

Walter Scott, so long a European force, has now, foiled by the victory of the school of Balzac, retired once more to the home he came from, but on British soil there is as yet no sign of any diminution of his honour or popularity. Continental criticism is bewildered at our unshaken loyalty to a writer whose art can be easily demonstrated to be obsolete in many of its characteristics. But English readers confess the perennial attractiveness of a writer whose "tone" is the most perfect in our national literature, who has left not a phrase which is morbid or petulant or base, who is the very type of that generous freedom of spirit which we are pleased to identify with the character of an English gentleman. Into the persistent admiration of Sir Walter Scott there enters something of the militant imperialism of our race.

# CHAPTER II

## THE AGE OF BYRON

### 1815–1850

It is noticeable that the early manifestations of the reforming spirit in English literature had been accompanied by nothing revolutionary in morals or conduct. It is true that, at the very outset, Wordsworth, Southey, and Coleridge had been inclined to a "pantisocratic" sympathy with the principles of the French Revolution, and had leaned to the radical side in politics. But the spirit of revolt was very mildly awakened in them, and when the Reign of Terror came, their aspirations after democratic freedom were nipped in the bud. Early in the century Wordsworth had become, what he remained, a Church and State Tory of the extreme type; Southey, who in 1794 had, "shocking to say, wavered between deism and atheism," promptly developed a horror for every species of liberal speculation, and contributed with gusto to the *Quarterly Review*. Temperament and circumstance combined to make Scott a conservative in politics and manners. Meanwhile, it was in the hands of these peaceful men that the literary revolution was proceeding, and we look back from 1815 with a sense of the extraordinary modesty and wholesome law-abiding morality of the generation which introduced romanticism in this country.

**Lord Byron**
(*Circa* 1804–1806)
*After a Portrait in the possession of A. C. Benson, Esq.*

No section of English literature is, we will not say more innocent merely, but more void of the appearance of offence than that which was produced by the romantic reformers of our poetry. The audacity of Wordsworth and Coleridge was purely artistic; it was bounded by the determination to destroy certain conventions of style, and to introduce new elements and new aspects into the treatment of poetry. But these novelties included nothing that could unsettle, or even excite, the conscience of the least mature of readers. Both these great writers spoke much of passion, and insisted on its resumption by an art which had permitted it to escape too long. But by passion Wordsworth understood no unruly turbulence of the senses, no revolt against conventional manners, no disturbance of social custom. He conceived the term, and illustrated his conception in his poetry, as intense emotion concentrated upon some object of physical or pathetic beauty—such as a mountain, a child, a flower—and led directly by it into the channel of imaginative expression. He saw that there were aspects of beauty which might lead to danger, but from these he and Scott, and even Coleridge, resolutely turned away their eyes.

Mrs. Byron

*After a Portrait by Thomas Stewardson in the possession of John Murray, Esq.*

To all the principal writers of this first generation, not merely vice, but coarseness and licence were abhorrent, as they had been to no earlier race of Englishmen. The rudeness of the eighteenth century gave way to a cold refinement, exquisitely crystal in its highest expressions, a little empty and inhuman in its lower ones. What the Continental nations unite to call our "hypocrisy," our determination not to face the ugly side of nature at all, to deny the very existence of the unseemly instincts, now came to the front. In contrast to the European riot, England held her garments high out of the mire, with a somewhat mincing air of excessive virtue. The image was created of Britannia, with her long teeth, prudishly averting her elderly eyes from the cancan of the nations. So far as this refinement was genuine it was a good thing—the spotless purity of Wordsworth and Scott is matter for national pride—but so far as it was indeed hypocritical, so far as it was an exhibition of empty spiritual arrogance, it was hateful. In any case, the cord was drawn so tight that it was bound to snap, and to the generation of intensely proper, conservative poets and novelists there succeeded a race

of bards who rejoiced to be thought profligates, socialists, and atheists. Our literature was to become "revolutionary" at last.

In the sixth Lord BYRON the pent-up animal spirits of the new era found the first channel for their violence, and England positively revelled in the poetry of crime and chaos. The representative of a race of lawless and turbulent men, proud as Lucifer, beautiful as Apollo, sinister as Loki, Byron appeared on the scenes arrayed in every quality which could dazzle the youthful and alarm the mature. His lovely curly head moved all the women to adore him; his melancholy attitudes were mysteriously connected with stories of his appalling wickedness; his rank and ostentation of life, his wild exotic tastes, his defiance of restraint, the pathos of his physical infirmity, his histrionic gifts as of one, half mountebank, half archangel, all these combined to give his figure, his whole legend, a matchless fascination. Nor, though now so much of the gold is turned to tinsel, though now the lights are out upon the stage where Byron strutted, can we cease to be fascinated. Even those who most strenuously deny him imagination, style, the durable parts of literature, cannot pretend to be unmoved by the unparalleled romance of his career. Goethe declared that a man so pre-eminent for character had never existed in literature before, and would probably never appear again. This should give us the note for a comparative estimate of Byron: in quality of style he is most unequal, and is never, perhaps, absolutely first-rate; but as an example of the literary temperament at its boiling-point, history records no more brilliant name.

**Lady Caroline Lamb in her Page's Costume**

*From a Miniature in the possession of John Murray, Esq.*

Byron was in haste to be famous, and wrote before he had learned his art. His intention was to resist the incursion of the romantic movement, and at the age of twenty-one he produced a satire, the aim of which, so far as it was not merely splenetic, was the dethronement of Wordsworth and Coleridge in favour of Dryden and Pope. In taste and conviction he was reactionary to the very last; but when he came to write, the verse poured forth like lava, and took romantic forms in spite of him. His character was formed during the two wild years of exile (June 1809 till July 1811), when, a prey to a frenzied restlessness, he scoured the Mediterranean, rescued Turkish

women, visited Lady Hester Stanhope, swam across the Hellespont, rattled at the windows of seraglios, and even—so Goethe and the world believed—murdered a man with a yataghan and captured an island of the Cyclades. Before he began to sing of Lara and the Giaour he was himself a Giaour, himself Lara and Conrad; he had travelled with a disguised Gulnare, he had been beloved by Medora, he had stabbed Hassan to the heart, and fought by the side of Alp the renegade; or, if he had not done quite all this, people insisted that he had, and he was too melancholy to deny the impeachment.

**Lord Byron**

*After a Portrait by W. Westall in the possession of Coningsby D'Israeli, Esq.*

Languid as Byron affected to be, and haughtily indolent, he wrote with extraordinary persistence and rapidity. Few poets have composed so much in so short a time. The first two cantos of *Childe Harold* in 1812 lead off the giddy masque of his productions, which for the next few years were far too numerous to be mentioned here in detail. Byron's verse romances, somewhat closely modelled in form on those of Scott, began with the *Giaour*, and each had a beautiful, fatal hero "of one virtue and a thousand crimes," in whom tens of thousands of awe-struck readers believed they recognised the poet himself in masquerade. All other poetry instantly paled before the astounding success of Byron, and Scott, who had reigned unquestioned as the popular minstrel of the age, "gave over writing verse-romances" and took to prose. Scott's courtesy to his young rival was hardly more exquisite than the personal respect which Byron showed to one whom he insisted in addressing as "the Monarch of Parnassus"; but Scott's gentle chieftains were completely driven out of the field by the Turkish bandits and pirates. All this time Byron was writing exceedingly little that has stood the test of time; nor, indeed, up to the date of his marriage in 1815, can it be said that he had produced much of any real poetical importance. He was now, however, to be genuinely unhappy and candidly inspired.

Adversity drove him in upon himself, and gave him something of creative

sincerity. Perhaps, if he had lived, and had found peace with advancing years, he might have become a great artist. But that he never contrived to be. In 1816 he left England, shaking its dust from his feet, no longer a pinchbeck pirate, but a genuine outlaw, in open enmity with society. This enfranchisement acted upon his genius like a tonic, and in the last eight years of his tempestuous and lawless life he wrote many things of extraordinary power and even splendour. Two sections of his work approach, nearer than any others, perfection in their kind. In a species of magnificent invective, of which the *Vision of Judgment* is the finest example, Byron rose to the level of Dryden and Swift; in the picturesque satire of social life—where he boldly imitated the popular poets of Italy, and in particular Casti and Pulci—his extreme ease and versatility, his masterly blending of humour and pathos, ecstasy and misanthropy, his variegated knowledge of men and manners, gave him, as Scott observed, something of the universality of Shakespeare. Here he is to be studied in *Beppo* and in the unmatched *Don Juan* of his last six years. It is in these and the related works that we detect the only perdurable Byron, the only poetry that remains entirely worthy of the stupendous fame of the author.

**Lord Byron**

*From a Drawing by Count D'Orsay, taken in* 1823.

It is the fatal defect of Byron that his verse is rarely exquisite. That indescribable combination of harmony in form with inevitable propriety in language which thrills the reader of Milton, of Wordsworth, of Shelley, of Tennyson — this is scarcely to be discerned in Byron. We are, in exchange, presented with a rapid volume of rough melody, burning words which are torches rather than stars, a fine impetuosity, a display of personal temperament which it has nowadays become more interesting to study in the poet than in the poetry, a great noise of trumpets and kettledrums in which the more delicate melodies of verse are drowned. These refinements, however, are imperceptible to all but native ears, and the lack of them has not prevented Byron from seeming to foreign critics to be by far the greatest and the most powerful of our poets. There was no difficulty in comprehending his splendid,

rolling rhetoric; and wherever a European nation stood prepared to inveigh against tyranny and conventionality, the spirit of Byron was ready to set its young poets ablaze.

**Mary Ann Chaworth**

*From an Engraving by Stone after an Original Drawing*

Hence, while in England the influence of Byron on poetry was not in the least degree commensurate with his fame, and while we have here to look to prose-writers, such as Bulwer and Disraeli, as his most direct disciples, his verse inspired a whole galaxy of poets on the Continent. The revival of Russian and Polish literature dates from Byron; his spirit is felt in the entire attitude and in not a few of the accents of Heine and of Leopardi; while to the romantic writers of France he seemed the final expression of all that was magnificent and intoxicating. Neither Lamartine nor Vigny, Victor Hugo nor Musset, was independent of Byron's influence, and in the last-mentioned we have the most exact reproduction of the peculiar Byronic gestures and passionate self-abandonment which the world has seen.

In *Don Juan* Byron had said that "poetry is but passion." This was a heresy, which it would be easy to refute, since by passion he intended little more than a relinquishing of the will to the instincts. But it was also a prophecy, for it was the reassertion of the right of the individual imagination to be a law to itself, and all subsequent emancipation of the spirit may be traced back to the ethical upheaval of which Byron was the storm-thrush. He finally broke up the oppressive silence which the pure accents of Wordsworth and Coleridge had not quite been able to conquer. With Byron the last rags of the artificiality which had bound European expression for a century and a half were torn off and flung to the winds. He taught roughly, melodramatically, inconsistently, but he taught a lesson of force and vitality. He was full of technical faults, drynesses, flatnesses; he lacked the power to finish; he offended by a hundred careless impertinences; but his whole being was an altar on which the flame of personal genius flared like a conflagration.

**Lady Noel Byron**

*From an Engraving by Finden after an Original Drawing*

**George Gordon Byron**, the sixth Lord Byron (1788–1824), was the only child of Captain John Byron by his second wife, Miss Catherine Gordon of Gight. He was born on the 22nd of January 1788, in London. The father, who had led a life of the wildest recklessness, died at Valenciennes in 1791. He had abandoned his wife, who, with her infant son, settled in lodgings in Aberdeen. From his father, and his father's line, the poet inherited his spirit of adventurous eccentricity, and from his mother his passionate temper and amenity to tenderness. In 1794 the sudden death of his cousin in Corsica made "the little boy who lives at Aberdeen" the heir to the title, and in 1798 the poet succeeded his grand-uncle, the "wicked Lord Byron" who had killed Mr. Chaworth in 1765, and who had survived at Newstead to extreme old age in a wretched defiance of society. After going to school at Nottingham, the boy was brought to London in 1799 to be treated, but in vain, for a club-foot. In 1800 Byron made his first "dash into poetry," inspired by the "transparent" beauty of his cousin, Margaret Parker. He was at this time at school at Dulwich, where his studies were so absurdly interfered with by his mother's indulgence, that in 1801 he was removed by his guardian, Lord Carlisle, to Harrow. Here Byron was greatly benefited, morally and intellectually, by the discipline of Dr. Drury. At Harrow he was turbulent and capricious, yet irregularly ardent in his studies and civilised by warm and valuable friendships. In his holidays, which were commonly spent with his mother, he became intimate with Mary Ann Chaworth of Annesley, to whom in 1803 he became passionately attached; but in the summer of 1805 she married a local squire. Byron, a few weeks later, was removed to Trinity College, Cambridge, where in July 1808 he took his degree. At the university he developed more athletic tastes than at school, and shot, rode, and boxed with skill: he had the reputation of being "a young man of tumultuous passions." After a false start in November 1806, Byron collected his juvenile poems again and issued them privately in January 1807; two months later he published from the Newark press the *Hours of Idleness*. He was now nominally at Cambridge, and fitfully hard at work, but between whiles sowing wild oats

**Augusta Ada Byron**

*From an Engraving by Stone after an Original Drawing*

**John Cam Hobhouse**

*From an Engraving after a Portrait by Wivell*

with much parade and effrontery, and posing as "a perfect Timon, not nineteen." In 1808 Byron left Cambridge for good, and settled at Newstead, and in 1809 made his first appearance, not a favourable one, in the House of Lords. *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* was now published, and proved an instant success. A final revel at Newstead Abbey was suddenly broken up in June 1809, and Byron left England with Hobhouse, intending to travel in Persia and India. The friends saw something of Portugal and Spain, and in the autumn arrived in Turkey, to spend the winter in Greece. The poem of *Childe Harold* accompanied the wanderings of which it became the record; the second canto was finished at Smyrna in March 1810, and Byron passed on to Constantinople. The next twelve months were spent in travel and adventure, and in the composition of masses of verse: in July 1811, with "a collection of marbles and skulls and hemlock and tortoises and servants," Byron returned to England. Before he could reach Newstead his mother was dead. For the next eighteen months the life of Byron offers no points of signal interest, but in February 1812 his active literary career began with the first instalment of *Childe Harold;* it was followed, in 1813, by *The Waltz*, *The Giaour*, and *The Bride of Abydos;* in 1814 by *The Corsair*, *Lara*, and the *Ode to Napoleon;* and in 1815 by *Hebrew Melodies;* and in 1816 by *The Siege of Corinth* and *Parisina*. These dates mark the first outbreak of Byron's immense popularity. He became at once the only possible competitor of Scott, with whom this rivalry did not prevent his forming a friendship highly to the credit of both, though they did not actually meet until the spring of 1815, when, "like the old heroes in Homer, we exchanged gifts; I [says Scott] gave Byron a beautiful dagger mounted with gold, . . . and Byron sent me a large sepulchral vase of silver full of dead men's bones." Women were not so platonically moved by the "pale, proud" poet; they noted him as "mad, bad, and dangerous to know." With all his fame and all his conquests

**Newstead Abbey**

*From a Drawing by W. Westall*

**The Countess Guiccioli**

*From a Bust in the Palazzo Gamba, Ravenna*

Byron was profoundly unhappy, and it was to find happiness that he plunged, without reflection, into his luckless marriage with Miss Millbanke, to whom he had proposed and been rejected in 1813. She now accepted him, and in January 1815 they were married. For a year the ill-assorted couple lived together in tolerable comfort; then, suddenly, Lady Byron took advantage of a visit she was paying to her family in Leicestershire, to announce to her husband in London that she should not return to him. She demanded a legal separation, but doggedly refused to state her reasons, and in spite of reams of commentary and conjecture we are as much in the dark to-day, as regards the real causes of the separation, as the gossips were eighty years ago. It is certain that, at first, the poet was patient and conciliatory, but, under his wife's obduracy, his temper broke down, and with extraordinary want of tact he made the public his confidants. His violent popularity had for some time been waning, and this want of prudence destroyed it—the whole British nation went over in sympathy to the insulted wife. On what grounds the public formed their opinion it is still difficult to discover, but, as Byron said, "it was general and it was decisive." The poet was accused of every crime, and before the storm of obloquy his pride and his sensitiveness recoiled: he turned and fled from England, settling himself "by the waves of the Adriatic, like the stag at bay, who betakes himself to the waters." In April 1816 he left London for Ostend, and he never set foot in his native land again. He brought with him a coach and a retinue; in Brussels the former was exchanged for a calèche, in which he travelled to Geneva. Here he formed an intimacy with Shelley, with whom he took many excursions on the lake, being nearly wrecked on one occasion. The Shelleys left Geneva for England in September, and Byron set out on a journey through Switzerland, of which *Manfred* was the result. This first year of exile was highly productive of poetry; to 1816 belong *The Prisoner of Chillon*, *The Dream*, *Childe Harold*, *Canto III.*, and many of Byron's finest lyrics. In October he started for Italy, and settled in Venice for several months. The year 1817 was spent either in that city or in restless wanderings over the length and breadth of Italy; in the autumn he rented a small villa at Este. His life now became absolutely reckless and wildly picturesque; a whole romantic legend gathered around it, which Byron himself was at no pains to reprove. He became, as one of his own servants said, "a good gondolier, spoiled by being a poet and a lord." Intellectually and imaginatively, it is plain that this romantic, lawless life suited Byron's temperament admirably. It was at this time that he wrote with the greatest vigour. Early in 1818 he finished *Beppo*, later he composed *Mazeppa*, and

**Palazzo Guiccioli, Ravenna**

in the winter of that year he began *Don Juan*. At this time he had the charge of his little daughter Allegra, whom in the summer of 1820 he put to school with the nuns at Cavalli Bagni; in April 1822 she died, to Byron's bitter sorrow, at the age of five years. Early in 1819 the poet began his liaison with Theresa, Countess Guiccioli, a beautiful young woman of the Romagna, who fell violently in love with him. Byron came over to Ravenna to visit her in June, and stayed with her there and at Bologna till nearly the end of the year. After a brief cessation of their loves he joined her again at Ravenna early in 1820; this was a period of comparative quietude, and Byron wrote *Marino Faliero*, *The Prophecy of Dante*, and the fourth and fifth cantos of *Don Juan*. "This connection with La Guiccioli," as Shelley clearly observed, was "an inestimable benefit" to Byron; the younger poet conceived the idea of bringing the lovers over to Pisa, a safer town for them than Ravenna.

**Byron's House at Ravenna, with a Tablet over the door relating to him**

Shelley secured the Palazzo Lanfranchi, and Byron took up his abode there in November 1821. He brought with him three dramas composed in Ravenna, *The Two Foscari*, *Sardanapalus*, and *Cain*. At Pisa Byron resumed his eager poetic activity, and in 1822 finished *Werner*, *The Deformed Transformed*, and *Heaven and Earth*, more or less daring examples of his new passion for romantic drama. *Cain*, in particular, awakened a storm of hostility among the orthodox in England, and the name of Byron became anathema; there was even a suggestion that the publisher should be proceeded against. It was in the midst of this fanatic storm that Byron still more audaciously outraged British respectability with what is perhaps the finest of all his writings, *The Vision of Judgment* (1822), and this time the printer was prosecuted and fined. Byron's breach with all that was respectable in England was now

**The Pine Forest at Ravenna, a favourite ride of Byron's**

complete; he gave up any idea of returning. In July the drowning of Shelley was a great shock to Byron, and, the Tuscan police about this time becoming very troublesome, he left Pisa and settled with La Guiccioli near Genoa, at the Villa Saluzzo; this was his last Italian home. Here he took up *Don Juan* once more, and here he wrote *The Island* and *The Age of Bronze*. Byron now became greatly interested in the war of Greek independence; he was elected a member of the Greek committee of government, and began to think that he might be useful in the Morea. In July 1823 he started from Genoa with money, arms, and medicines for the revolutionaries. After landing at Leghorn, where he received an epistle in verse from Goethe, Byron reached Kephalonia in August and stayed there until December. There was a suggestion that the Greeks should make him their king, and he said, "If they make me the offer, I will perhaps not reject it." In the last days of 1823 he arrived with all his retinue at Missolonghi, received "as if he were the Messiah." But he was soon attacked by an illness, which took the form of rheumatic fever.

**Palazzo Lanfranchi, Pisa**

*From a Photograph*

**Missolonghi**

*From a Drawing by Clarkson Stanfield*

On the 19th of April 1824 he died at Missolonghi — "England had lost her brightest genius, Greece her noblest friend." His body was embalmed and sent to England, where burial in Westminster Abbey was applied for and refused to it; on the 16th of July Byron was buried at Hucknall Torkard. In 1830, when the scandal caused by his adventures had begun to die away, Moore published his *Life and Letters of Byron*, which revealed the poet as a brilliant and racy writer of easy prose. Without question, Byron is among the most admirable of English letter-writers, and his correspondence offers a valuable commentary on his works in verse. In the final edition of his works

brought out by Mr. R. E. Prothero between 1898 and 1903, the mass of Byron's letters is almost doubled. The beauty of Byron was proverbial; he had dark curled hair, a pale complexion, great elegance, and, notwithstanding his slight deformity, activity of figure, with eyes the most lustrous ever seen. His restlessness, his self-consciousness, his English pride, his Italian passion, the audacity and grandeur of his dreams, his "fatal" fascination, made him, and make him still, the most interesting personality in the history of English literature.

FROM "PROMETHEUS."

Titan! to thee the strife was given
Between the suffering and the will,
Which torture where they cannot kill;
And the inexorable Heaven,
And the deaf tyranny of Fate,
The ruling principle of Hate,
Which for its pleasure doth create
The things it may annihilate,
Refused thee even the boon to die:
The wretched gift Eternity
Was thine—and thou hast borne it well.
All that the Thunderer wrung from thee
Was but the menace which flung back
On him the torments of thy rack;
The fate thou didst so well foresee,
But would not to appease him tell;
And in thy Silence was his Sentence,
And in his soul a vain repentance,
And evil dread so ill dissembled,
That in his hand the lightnings trembled.

Thy godlike crime was to be kind,
  To render with thy precepts less
  The sum of human wretchedness,
And strengthen Man with his own mind;
But baffled as thou wert from high,
Still in thy patient energy,
In the endurance, and repulse
  Of thine impenetrable Spirit,
Which Earth and Heaven could not convulse,
  A mighty lesson we inherit:
Thou art a symbol and a sign
  To mortals of their fate and force;
Like thee Man is in part divine,
  A troubled stream from a pure source;
And Man in portions can foresee
His own funereal destiny;
His wretchedness, and his resistance,
And his sad unallied existence:
To which his Spirit may oppose
Itself—and equal to all woes,
  And a firm will, and a deep sense,
Which even in torture can descry
  Its own concentred recompense,
Triumphant where it dares defy,
And making Death a Victory!

Newstead Abbey Notts.

Nov 3d 1808

My dear Hodgson,

I expected to have heard ere this the event of your interview with the mysterious Mr Hayes, my re- -luctant commandant: however as I had no wish to trouble you with ~~with~~ the adjustment of my concerns with that illustrious Stranger, I have no right to complain of your silence — — you have of course seen Drury in all the

pleasing palpitations of anticipated Rest
= Look, well! he has still something to
look forward to and his presents ex
= tasses are certainly available, "peace be
with him and with his spirit" and his
flesh also, at least just now. —— — —
Hotham and your humble are still here,
Hotham hunts &c and I do nothing,
we=dined the other day with a neigh=
= bouring Squire (not Collet of Stainers)
and repelled your absence, as the Bon=
= quet of Stainers was scarcely to be com=
= pared to our last "feast of Reason" —
You know, laughing is the sign of a rational

animal, so says Dr Smollett, I think so
too, but unluckily my thick dust always
beats pace with my opinions. — I had not
so much respect for sensibility the other day as
I could have wished, for I was seated near
a woman, to whom when a boy I was as
much attached as boys generally are,
and more than a man should be. I
knew this before I went, and determined
= mined to be valiant, and converse with
"sang froid," but instead I forgot my values
and my nonchalance, and, more struck
my lips are to laugh, for lips to speak, &
the Lady was almost as afraid as myself,
she'd made both the object of more observ-
-ation, than if we had conducted ourselves

with easy indifference. — You will then
& this your nonsense, if you had seen it
you would have laughed it still more
idiotical. — What fools we ! we envy
for a plaything, like children we are
never satisfied till we break it then throw
like them, we cannot get rid of it, by
putting it in the fire. —
I have tried for Gifford's Epistle to Peirse &
the Berkeley says the others were out of
for waste paper, if you can procure me
- any, I shall be much obliged. —
Adieu. believe me my dear Sir
yours ever sincerely
B Byron

### Stanzas for Music.

There be none of Beauty's daughters
  With a magic like thee ;
And like music on the waters
  Is thy sweet voice to me,
When, as if its sound were causing
The charmed ocean's pausing,
The waves lie still and gleaming,
And the lull'd winds seem dreaming ;

And the midnight moon is weaving
  Her bright chain o'er the deep,
Whose breast is gently heaving,
  As an infant's asleep :
So the spirit bows before thee,
To listen and adore thee,
With a full but soft emotion,
Like the swell of Summer's ocean.

### Description of Haidee from "Don Juan."

Her brow was overhung with coins of gold,
  That sparkled o'er the auburn of her hair,
Her clustering hair, whose longer locks were roll'd
  In braids behind ; and though her stature were
Even of the highest for a female mould,
  They nearly reached her heel ; and in her air
There was a something which bespoke command,
As one who was a lady in the land.

Her hair, I said, was auburn ; but her eyes
  Were black as death, their lashes the same hue,
Of downcast length, in whose silk shadow lies
  Deepest attraction ; for when to the view
Forth from its raven fringe the full glance flies,
  Ne'er with such force the swiftest arrow flew :
'Tis as the snake late coil'd, who pours his length,
And hurls at once his venom and his strength.

Her brow was white and low, her cheek's pure dye
  Like twilight, rosy still with the set sun ;
Short upper lip—sweet lips that make us sigh
  Ever to have seen such : for she was one
Fit for the model of a statuary
  (A race of mere impostors, when all's done
I've seen much finer women, ripe and real,
Than all the nonsense of their stone ideal).

### From "Stanzas."

Could Love for ever
Run like a river,
And Time's endeavour
  Be tried in vain—

No other pleasure
With this could measure,
And like a treasure
We'd hug the chain;
But since our sighing
Ends not in dying,
And, formed for flying,
Love plumes his wing;
Then for this reason
Let's love a season,—
But let that season be only Spring.

When lovers parted
Feel broken-hearted,
And, all hopes thwarted,
Expect to die,—
A few years older,
Ah! how much colder
They might behold her
For whom they sigh!
When link'd together,
In every weather,
They pluck Love's feather
From out his wing—
He'll stay for ever,
But sadly shiver
Without his plumage, when past the spring.

FROM "THE VISION OF JUDGMENT."

Saint Peter sat by the celestial gate:
His keys were rusty, and the lock was dull,
So little trouble had been given of late:
Not that the place by any means was full,
But since the Gallic era "eighty-eight,"
The devils had ta'en a longer, stronger pull,
And "a pull all together," as they say
At sea—which drew most souls another way.

The angels all were singing out of tune,
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the sun and moon,
Or curb a runaway young star or two,
Or wild colt of a comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail,
As boats are sometimes by a wanton whale.

The guardian seraphs had retired on high,
Finding their charges past all care below;
Terrestrial business fill'd nought in the sky
Save the recording angel's black bureau;
Who found, indeed, the facts to multiply
With such rapidity of vice and woe,
That he had stripp'd off both his wings in quills,
And yet was in arrear of human ills.

His business so augmented of late years,
That he was forced, against his will no doubt
(Just like those cherubs, earthly ministers),
For some resource to turn himself about,
And claim the help of his celestial peers,
To aid him ere he should be quite worn out,
By the increased demand for his remarks:
Six angels and twelve saints were named his clerks.

This was a handsome board—at least for heaven;
And yet they had even then enough to do,
So many conquerors' cars were daily driven,
So many kingdoms fitted up anew;
Each day, too, slew its thousands six or seven,
Till at the crowning carnage, Waterloo,
They threw their pens down in divine disgust,
The page was so besmear'd with blood and dust.

## On this Day I Complete my Thirty-Sixth Year.

Missolonghi, *January* 22, 1824.

'Tis time this heart should be unmoved,
Since others it hath ceased to move:
Yet, though I cannot be beloved,
Still let me love!

My days are in the yellow leaf;
The flowers and fruits of love are gone:
The worm, the canker, and the grief
Are mine alone.

The fire that on my bosom preys
Is lone as some volcanic isle;
No torch is kindled at its blaze—
A funeral pile.

The hope, the fear, the jealous care,
The exalted portion of the pain
And power of love, I cannot share,
But wear the chain.

But 'tis not *thus*—and 'tis not *here*—
Such thoughts should shake my soul, nor *now*,
Where glory decks the hero's bier,
Or binds his brow.

The sword, the banner, and the field,
Glory and Greece, around me see!
The Spartan, borne upon his shield,
Was not more free.

Awake! (not Greece—she *is* awake!)
Awake, my spirit! Think through *whom*
Thy life-blood tracks its parent lake,
And then strike home!

Tread those reviving passions down
Unworthy manhood!—unto thee
Indifferent should the smile or frown
Of beauty be.

If thou regrett'st thy youth, *why live?*
The land of honourable death
Is here :—up to the field, and give
Away thy breath.

Seek out—less often sought than found—
A soldier's grave, for thee the best ;
Then look around, and choose thy ground,
And take thy rest.

**Shelley** The experiment which Byron made was repeated with a more exquisite sincerity by PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY, who resembled him in belonging to the aristocratic class, and in having a strong instinctive passion for liberty and toleration. The younger poet, however, showed still less caution than the elder, and while yet a boy gained a dangerous reputation for violent radical prejudices and anti-social convictions. Partly on this account, and partly because the transcendental imagination of Shelley was less easy than Byron's piratical romance for common minds to appreciate, the poetry of the former was almost completely unrecognised until many years after his death, and Byron's deference to Shelley was looked upon as a fantastic whim of friendship. The younger poet was erratic at Eton and Oxford, being expelled from the university for a puerile outburst of atheism. The productions of Shelley were already numerous when, in his *Alastor*, he first showed any definite disposition for the higher parts of poetry. This majestic study in blank verse was superior in melody and in imaginative beauty to anything that had been written in English, other than by Wordsworth and Coleridge in their youth, since the romantic age began. The scholarship of Milton and Wordsworth was obvious, but *Alastor* contains passages

**Percy Bysshe Shelley**
*After the Portrait by Miss Curran*

descriptive of the transport of the soul in the presence of natural loveliness in which a return to the Hellenic genius for style is revealed.

Shelley lived only six years longer, but these were years of feverish composition, sustained, in spite of almost complete want of public sympathy, at a fiery height of intensity. He left England, and in that exile was brought immediately into contact with Byron, with whom he formed an intimacy which no eccentricity on either side sufficed to dissolve. That he was serviceable to Byron no one will deny; that Byron depressed him he did not attempt to conceal from himself; yet the esteem of the more popular poet was valuable to the greater one. The terror caused by the vague rumour of Shelley's rebellious convictions was not allayed by the publication of *Laon and Cythna*, a wild narrative of an enthusiastic brother and sister, martyrs to liberty. In 1818 was composed, but not printed, the singularly perfect realistic poem of *Julian and Maddalo*. Shelley was now saturating himself with the finest Greek and Italian classic verse—weaving out of his thoughts and intellectual experiences a pure and noble system of æsthetics. This he illustrated by his majestic, if diffuse and sometimes overstrained lyrical drama of *Prometheus Unbound*, with which he published a few independent lyrics which scarcely have their peer in the literature of the world; among these the matchless *Ode to the West Wind* must be named. The same year saw the publication of the *Cenci*, the most dramatic poetic play written in English since the tragedy of *Venice Preserved*. Even here, where Shelley might expect to achieve popularity, something odious in the essence of the plot warned off the public.

**Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley**

*After the Portrait by Richard Rothwell*

He continued to publish, but without an audience; nor did his *Epipsychidion*, a melodious rhapsody of Platonic love, nor his *Adonais*, an elegy of high dignity and splendour, in the manner of Moschus and in commemoration of Keats, nor the crystalline lyrics with which he eked out

his exiguous publications, attract the slightest interest. Shelley was, more than any other English poet has been, *le banni de liesse*. Then, without warning, he was drowned while yachting in the Gulf of Spezzia. He left behind him unrevised, amid a world of exquisite fragments, a noble but vague gnomic poem, *The Triumph of Life*, in which Petrarch's *Trionfi* are summed up and sometimes excelled.

A life of disappointment and a death in obscurity were gradually followed by the growth of an almost exaggerated reputation. Fifty years after his death Shelley had outshone all his contemporaries—nay, with the exception of Shakespeare, was probably the most passionately admired of all the English poets. If this extremity of fame has once more slightly receded, if Shelley holds his place among the sovereign minstrels of England, but rather abreast of than in front of them, it is because time has reduced certain of his violent paradoxes to commonplaces, and because the world, after giving several of his axioms of conduct full and respectful consideration, has determined to refrain from adopting them. Shelley, when he was not inspired and an artist, was a prophet vaguely didactic or neurotically prejudiced; his is the highest ideal of poetic art produced by the violence of the French Revolution, but we are too constantly reminded of that moral parentage, and his *sans-culottism* is no longer exhilarating, it is merely tiresome. There are elements, then, even in Shelley, which have to be pared away; but, when these are removed, the remainder is beautiful beyond the range of praise—perfect in aerial, choral melody, perfect in the splendour and purity of its imagery, perfect in the divine sweetness and magnetic tenderness of its sentiment. He is probably the English writer who has achieved the highest successes in pure lyric, whether of an elaborate and antiphonal order, or of that which springs in a stream of soaring music straight from the heart.

Closely allied as he was with Byron in several respects, both of temperament and circumstance, it is fortunate that Shelley was very little affected by the predominance of his vehement rival. His intellectual ardour threw out, not puffs of smoke, as Byron's did, but a white vapour. He is not always transparent, but always translucent, and his mind moves ethereally among incorporeal images and pantheistic attributes, dimly at times, yet always clothed about with radiant purity. Of the gross Georgian mire not a particle stuck to the robes of Shelley. His diction is curiously compounded of forcible, fresh mintages, mingled with the verbiage of the lyric poets of the eighteenth century, so that at his best he seems like Æschylus, and at his worst merely like Akenside. For all his excessive attachment to revolutionary ideas, Shelley retains much more of the age of Gray than either Keats, Coleridge, or Wordsworth; his style, carefully considered, is seen to rest on a basis built about 1760, from which it is every moment springing and sparkling like a fountain in columns of ebullient lyricism. But sweep away from Shelley whatever gives us exquisite pleasure,

and the residuum will be found to belong to the eighteenth century. Hence, paradoxical as it sounds, the attitude of Shelley to style was in the main retrograde; he was, for instance, no admirer of the arabesques of the Cockney school. He was, above all else, a singer, and in the direction of song he rises at his best above all other English, perhaps above all other modern European poets. There is an ecstasy in his best lyrics and odes that claps its wings and soars until it is lost in the empyrean of transcendental melody. This rhapsodical charm is entirely inimitable; and in point of fact Shelley, passionately admired, has been very little followed, and with success, perhaps, only by Mr. Swinburne. His genius lay outside the general trend of our poetical evolution; he is exotic and unique, and such influence as he has had, apart from the effect on the pulse of the individual of the rutilant beauty of his strophes, has not been very

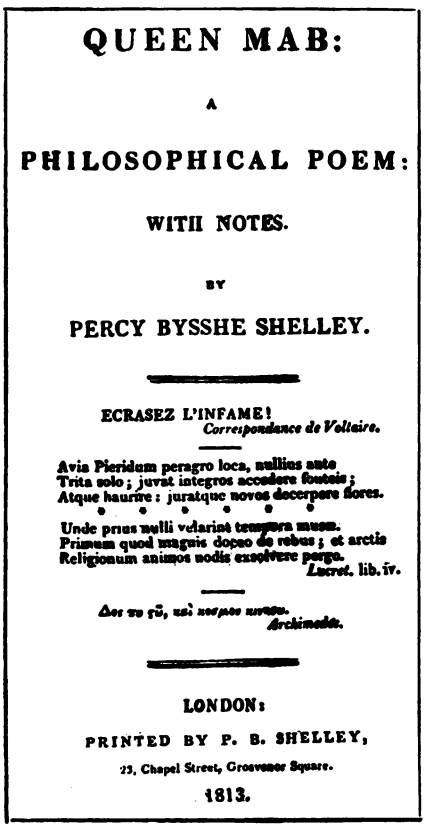
**Field Place, Horsham, the Birthplace of Shelley**

*From a Photograph*

advantageous. He is often hectic, and sometimes hysterical, and, to use his own singular image, those who seek for mutton-chops will discover that Shelley keeps a gin-palace.

**Percy Bysshe Shelley** (1792–1822) was the eldest son of Timothy Shelley and his wife, Elizabeth Pilfold; his grandfather, Bysshe Shelley, a man of brilliant gifts, was the head of one branch of a wealthy and ancient Sussex family, and was made a baronet in 1806. The poet was born at Field Place, Horsham, on the 4th of August 1792. In 1798 he was sent, with his sisters, to a private school at Warnham, and in 1802 to Sion House, Brentford; in 1805 he proceeded to Eton. Here the peculiarities of his nature began to be felt; "tamed by affection, but unconquered by blows, what chance was there that Shelley should be happy at a public school?" He gave himself to the study of chemistry under Dr. Lind, but towards the end of his Etonian life he seems to have turned to literature. During

the winter of 1809 he first began seriously to write, and to this date belong *The Wandering Jew* in verse, and the romance of *Zastrozzi* in prose. The latter absurdity was actually published early in 1810, and a little later in the same year appeared *Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire* (which was long lost, and was rediscovered in 1898), and a Republican hoax, the *Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson*. Shelley was therefore an experienced author when he matriculated at University College, Oxford, on the 10th of April 1810; he took up his residence in the following term. Here he immediately made acquaintance with T. J. Hogg, who has left us invaluable memories of this period in Shelley's life. During his brief stay at Oxford, Shelley was keen in the pursuit of miscellaneous knowledge; "no student ever read more assiduously. He was to be found, book in hand, at all hours, reading in season and out of season." But he hated the prescribed curriculum, and indulged already in speculations which were outside the range of Oxford daring. One of them was the paramount importance of liberty and of toleration. In February 1811, Shelley printed and circulated a pamphlet entitled *The Necessity of Atheism*, to which the attention of the Master of his college was presently drawn, and on the 25th of March he and Hogg were expelled from the University. His father forbade him to return to Field Place, and the friends settled in lodgings at No. 15 Poland Street, London. After a short period of pinching poverty, Shelley was reconciled to his father, and received an allowance of £200 a year. Late in the summer of 1811 a foolish schoolgirl, Harriet Westbrook, threw herself on Shelley's protection, and, without loving her, he married her in Edinburgh. The eccentric movements of the next few months have occupied the biographers of the poet somewhat in excess of their real importance. The absurd young couple went to York, to Keswick, to Dublin, in each place proposing to stay "for ever." In February 1812 they issued their revolutionary *Address to the Irish People*, and other pamphlets. They were warned to leave Dublin, and in April we find them settled at Nantgwilt in North Wales, and a little later at Lynmouth. Their movements now became incessant, but in April 1813 they were again in London, where in June their first child, Ianthe, was born. In this year was published *Queen Mab*, the last and best of the works of Shelley's crude first period. Meanwhile he had made the acquaintance of Godwin, with whose family he formed a violent friendship, culminating in love for Godwin's daughter Mary, a girl of sixteen, with whom he eloped to France in



QUEEN MAB:

A

PHILOSOPHICAL POEM:

WITH NOTES.

BY

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

ECRASEZ L'INFAME!
*Correspondance de Voltaire.*

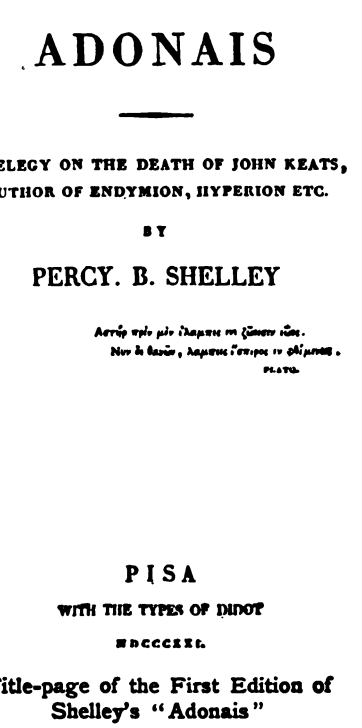
Avia Pieridum peragro loca, nullius ante
Trita solo; juvat integros accedere fontes;
Atque haurire: juratque novas decerpere flores.
* * * * * *
Unde prius nulli velarint tempora musæ.
Primum quod magnis doceo de rebus; et arctis
Religionum animos nodis exsolvere pergo.
*Lucret.* lib. iv.

Δος τυ ποῦ στῶ, καὶ κοσμον κινασω.
*Archimedes.*

LONDON:
PRINTED BY P. B. SHELLEY,
23, Chapel Street, Grosvenor Square.
1813.

**Title-page of the First Edition of Shelley's "Queen Mab."**

July 1814; he never saw Harriet again, and in December 1816 she committed suicide, not, however, it is only just to say, from any apparent disappointment at ceasing to live with Shelley. The poet, Mary Godwin, and her cousin Jane Clairemont, crossed France partly on foot, entered Switzerland over the Jura, and stayed at Brunnen till their money was exhausted, when they returned to England by the Rhine in September. In 1815 Sir Timothy succeeded to the title and estates, and an arrangement was made by which the poet received £1000 a year. The wanderings were now resumed on a bolder scale, and Shelley gained that knowledge of natural scenery which was in future to be so prominent a feature of his work. Up to this time he had written hardly anything which was of real merit; his genius now woke up, and the first-fruits of it was *Alastor*, published in 1816. In May of that year Shelley and Byron met for the first time at Geneva, and were thrown into mutual daily intercourse. Returning to England in the autumn, Shelley took a cottage at Great Marlowe, and in December he married Mary Godwin. In 1817, although worried with a Chancery suit about the custody of his children by his first wife, Shelley wrote his long poem of *Laon and Cythna* (*The Revolt of Islam*). His health now began to give him much apprehension, and in the winter of 1817 he seemed to be sinking in a consumption. In March 1818, to find a warmer climate, the Shelleys left England in company with Jane Clairemont and Byron's child Allegra. The rest of the year was spent wandering through Italy in search of a home to suit them. During this year they saw much of Byron. The winter of 1818 was spent by Shelley at Naples in "constant and poignant physical suffering," and in deep depression of spirits. His health was, notwithstanding, steadily tending towards recovery; there was no organic disease, and if Shelley had escaped drowning he might have become a tough old man. The Shelleys lived in Italy almost without other acquaintances than Byron, and an agreeable family at Leghorn, the Gisbornes. In 1819 he published *Rosalind and Helen* and *The Cenci;* in June he lost in Rome his dearly-loved son William, who now lies buried beside his father and Keats. In November another son, afterwards Sir Percy Florence Shelley, was born to them in Florence. The poet was now at the very height of his genius, composing continuously, and before 1819 was closed he had finished *Prometheus Unbound*, which, with some of the most splendid of all Shelley's lyrics, was published the following year. None of these publications, however, attracted either the critics or the public, and in the summer of 1819 Shelley was violently attacked by the *Quarterly Review*. He was branded as a dangerous atheist, and, as Trelawney records, was now universally shunned by English visitors



ADONAIS

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF JOHN KEATS, AUTHOR OF ENDYMION, HYPERION ETC.

BY

PERCY. B. SHELLEY

Ἀστὴρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐν ζῶσιν ἴσος.
Νῦν δὲ θανὼν, λαμπὰς ἔσπερος ἐν φθίμενοις.
PLATO.

PISA

WITH THE TYPES OF DIDOT

MDCCCXXI.

**Title-page of the First Edition of Shelley's "Adonais"**

to Italy, and treated as a monster. It is even said that a brute of an Englishman knocked him down with his fist on hearing his name in the post-office at Pisa, where the Shelleys settled early in January 1820. Byron came to the Villa Lanfranchi to be near them, and here they enjoyed the friendship of Trelawney, Medwin, and the Williamses. Shelley's publications during the year were *Prometheus Unbound* and the anonymous satirico-political drama of *Œdipus Tyrannus*. At Pisa, however, his faculties were blunted and depressed, and it is far from certain that constant intercourse with so mannered a character as that of Byron was beneficial to Shelley. In the beginning of 1821, however, he was greatly roused by his Platonic attachment to the imprisoned novice, Emilia Viviani, about whom he composed *Epipsychidion*, and published it anonymously as the work of a man who "died at Florence as he was preparing for a voyage to the Cyclades." The death of Keats also deeply moved Shelley, and he wrote the elegy of *Adonais*, which he printed at Pisa in 1821. A visit of Prince Mavrocordato to the Shelleys in April roused the poet to a ferment of enthusiasm for the cause of Greek liberty, and he sat down to the composition of his choral drama of *Hellas*. He wrote, "Our roots never struck so deeply as at Pisa;" and this continued his real home to the last, although in April 1822, in order to escape the heat, the whole circle of friends transported themselves to the Gulf of Spezzia. They rented near

**The Gulf of Spezia**

*From a Drawing by Clarkson Stanfield*

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY
COR CORDIUM
NATUS IV AUG. MDCCXCII
OBIIT VIII JUL. MDCCCXXII
"Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange"

**Shelley's Grave in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome**

Livorno, August 5. 1819.

My dear Miss Curran

I ought to have written to you some time ago but my ill spirits & ill health has forever furnished me with an excuse for delaying till tomorrow... I fear that you still continue the cabala of giving the ultimating my apology——

A thousand thanks for your kind attention to my request I have considered the drawings, & neither of them, nor indeed perhaps any attempt at Sculpture seems to me fit for the purpose I strongly incline to prefer an unornamented pyramid of white marble as of the most durable form & the simplest appearance, but if you will permit, I will send you my decision soon. You have too much good nature not to excuse me such a subject as trouble which I give you— I will send at the same time the Inscription.—

Mary & Jane still continue wretchedly depressed— more so than a stranger (tho' perhaps I might not to call me so) could imagine— We live almost as we did in Italy, save in society.— We think, but as yet only think of Rome for the winter——

I have nearly finished my Cenci— which I fancy likes. I wish very much to get a good engraving made of the picture in the Colonna Palace, & to have the palace by the Fountain How much can this & money procure

a first-rate Roman Artist demand for such a work—
Dare I ask you to add to the amount of so many favours which must be so long unrepaid, that of charging yourself with such a Commission?—

It will be one to you in prosecuting the Picture, is more than I can express— may I hope that you may write me an order to the Bankers to pay the expences for it when made—

Let us hear from you both of Spirits, & be they better—

Mary Jane unites with
P. B. Shelley.

Could you be kind enough— Mary says— as to send any drawings of simple ornamental forms, such as you consider Raphael as well as Marcotte?— I mean to a three pyramid—

Lerici the Villa Magni, a dwelling which "looked more like a boat or bathing house than a place to live in." Here they all resided, in easy and cheerful contiguity, from April 26 to July 8. Shelley, who had always loved the sea, spent his days in a little skiff and his evenings on the verandah "facing the sea and almost over it," reading his poems, listening to Mrs. Williams's guitar, or discoursing with his friends. It was during this, the latest and perhaps the happiest station of his career, that Shelley composed, what he left unfinished, *The Triumph of Life*. On the 8th of July Shelley and Williams, with a young English sailor, started from Leghorn, where Shelley had been visiting Leigh Hunt, for Lerici, in his yacht, the *Don Juan*. She was probably run down by a felucca, for all hands were lost. On the 18th Shelley's body was washed ashore at Via Reggio, and was cremated, in the presence of Byron, Hunt, and Trelawney. The impression made by Shelley's prose has not been so vivid as that by his poetry, but he was an extremely lucid and pure master of pedestrian English. This side of his talent was first displayed, not in his bombastic novels, but in the *Letter to Lord Ellenborough*, 1812, a fine piece of invective. In 1840 his widow published his *Essays and Letters*, but Shelley's prose writings were not properly collected until 1880, when Mr. H. Buxton Forman brought them together in four volumes. The personal appearance of Shelley was highly romantic. His eyes were blue and extremely penetrating; his hair brown; his skin exceedingly clear and transparent, and he had a look of extraordinary rapture on his "flushed, feminine, and artless face" when interested. To the end his figure was boyish; in the last year of his life he seemed "a tall, thin stripling, blushing like a girl." But he was not wanting in manliness, though awkward and unhandy in manly exercises, and he left on all who knew him well the recollection of one who was "frank and outspoken, like a well-conditioned boy, well-bred and considerate for others, because he was totally devoid of selfishness and vanity."

THE LAST CHORUS IN "HELLAS."

The world's great age begins anew;
  The golden years return;
The earth doth like a snake renew
  Her winter weeds outworn;
Heaven smiles, and faiths and empires gleam
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
  From waves screner far;
A new Peneus rolls his fountains
  Against the morning star;
Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep.

A loftier Argo cleaves the main,
  Fraught with a later prize;
Another Orpheus sings again,
  And loves, and weeps, and dies;
A new Ulysses leaves once more
Calypso for his native shore.

Oh! write no more the Tale of Troy,
If earth Death's scroll must be!
Nor mix with Laian rage the joy
Which dawns upon the free,
Although a subtler Sphinx renew
Riddles of death Thebes never knew.

Another Athens shall arise,
And to remoter time
Bequeath, like sunset to the skies,
The splendour of its prime;
And leave, if naught so bright may live,
All earth can take or heaven can give.

Saturn and Love their long repose
Shall burst, more bright and good
Than all who fell, than one who rose,
Than many unsubdued:
Not gold, not blood, their altar dowers,
But votive tears and symbol flowers.

Oh cease! must hate and death return?
Cease! must men kill and die?
Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
Of bitter prophecy.
The world is weary of the past,
Oh might it die or rest at last!

### A Lament.

Swifter far than summer's flight,
Swifter far than youth's delight,
Swifter far than happy night,
Art thou come and gone:
As the earth when leaves are dead,
As the night when sleep is sped,
As the heart when joy is fled,
I am left lone, alone.

The swallow Summer comes again,
The owlet Night resumes her reign,
But the wild swan Youth is fain
To fly with thee, false as thou.
My heart each day desires the morrow,
Sleep itself is turned to sorrow,
Vainly would my winter borrow
Sunny leaves from any bough.

Lilies for a bridal bed,
Roses for a matron's head,
Violets for a maiden dead,
Pansies let my flowers be:
On the living grave I bear,
Scatter them without a tear,
Let no friend, however dear,
Waste one hope, one fear for me.

FROM "EPIPSYCHIDION."

A ship is floating in the harbour now,
A wind is hovering o'er the mountain's brow;
There is a path on the sea's azure floor,
No keel has ever ploughed that path before;
The halcyons brood around the foamless isles;
The treacherous Ocean has forsworn its wiles;
The merry mariners are bold and free:
Say, my heart's sister, wilt thou sail with me?
Our bark is as an albatross, whose nest
Is a far Eden of the purple East;
And we between her wings will sit, while Night
And Day, and Storm, and Calm, pursue their flight,
Our ministers, along the boundless Sea,
Treading each other's heels, unheededly.
It is an isle under Ionian skies,
Beautiful as a wreck of Paradise,
And, for the harbours are not safe and good,
This land would have remained a solitude,
But for some pastoral people native there,
Who from the Elysian, clear, and golden air
Draw the last spirit of the age of gold,
Simple and spirited, innocent and bold.
The blue Ægean girds this chosen home,
With ever-changing sound and light and foam
Kissing the sifted sands, and caverns hoar;
And all the winds wandering along the shore
Undulate with the undulating tide:
There are thick woods where sylvan forms abide;
And many a fountain, rivulet, and pond,
As clear as elemental diamond,
Or serene morning air; and far beyond,
The mossy tracks made by the goats and deer
(Which the rough shepherd treads but once a year),
Pierce into glades, caverns, and bowers, and halls
Built round with ivy, which the waterfalls,
Illumining, with sound that never fails,
Accompany the noonday nightingales;
And all the place is peopled with sweet airs;
The light clear element which the isle wears
Is heavy with the scent of lemon-flowers,
Which floats like mist laden with unseen showers,
And falls upon the eyelids like faint sleep;
And from the moss violets and jonquils peep,
And dart their arrowy odour through the brain
Till you might faint with that delicious pain.
And every motion, odour, beam, and tone,
With that deep music is in unison;
Which is a soul within the soul—they seem
Like echoes of an antenatal dream.

### To a Lady Singing to her Accompaniment on the Guitar.

As the moon's soft splendour
O'er the faint cold starlight of heaven
Is thrown,
So thy voice most tender
To the strings without soul has given
Its own.

The stars will awaken,
Though the moon sleep a full hour later
To-night:
No leaf will be shaken
Whilst the dews of thy melody scatter
Delight.

Though the sound overpowers,
Sing again, with thy sweet voice revealing
A tone
Of some world far from ours,
Where music and moonlight and feeling
Are one.

### To Night.

Swiftly walk over the western wave,
Spirit of Night!
Out of the misty eastern cave,
Where, all the long and lone daylight,
Thou wovest dreams of joy and fear,
Which make thee terrible and dear,—
Swift be thy flight!

Wrap thy form in a mantle grey,
Star-inwrought!
Blind with thine hair the eyes of day,
Kiss her until she be wearied out;
Then wander o'er city, and sea, and land,
Touching all with thine opiate wand—
Come, long sought!

When I arose and saw the dawn,
I sighed for thee;
When light rode high, and the dew was gone,
And noon lay heavy on flower and tree,
And the weary Day turned to his rest,
Lingering like an unloved guest,
I sighed for thee.

Thy brother Death came, and cried,
Wouldst thou me?
Thy sweet child Sleep, the filmy-eyed,
Murmured like a noontide bee,
Shall I nestle near thy side?
Wouldst thou me?—And I replied,
No, not thee!

Death will come when thou art dead,
Soon, too soon—
Sleep will come when thou art fled;
Of neither would I ask the boon
I ask of thee, beloved Night—
Swift be thine approaching flight
Come soon, soon!

FROM "ADONAIS."

All he had loved, and moulded into thought,
From shape, and hue, and odour, and sweet sound,
Lamented Adonais. Morning sought
Her eastern watch-tower, and her hair unbound,
Wet with the tears which should adorn the ground,
Dimmed the aërial eyes that kindle day;
Afar the melancholy thunder moaned,
Pale Ocean in unquiet slumber lay,
And the wild winds flew round, sobbing in their dismay.

Lost Echo sits amid the voiceless mountains,
And feeds her grief with his remembered lay,
And will no more reply to winds or fountains,
Or amorous birds perched on the young green spray,
Or herdsman's horn, or bell at closing day;
Since she can mimic not his lips, more dear
Than those for whose disdain she pined away
Into a shadow of all sounds:—a drear
Murmur, between their songs, is all the woodmen hear.

Grief made the young Spring wild, and she threw down
Her kindling buds, as if she Autumn were,
Or they dead leaves; since her delight is flown,
For whom should she have waked the sullen year?
To Phœbus was not Hyacinth so dear,
Nor to himself Narcissus, as to both
Thou Adonais: wan they stand and sere
Amid the faint companions of their youth,
With dew all turned to tears; odour, to sighing ruth.

Thy spirit's sister, the lorn nightingale
Mourns not her mate with such melodious pain;
Not so the eagle, who like thee could scale
Heaven, and could nourish in the sun's domain
Her mighty youth with morning, doth complain,
Soaring and screaming round her empty nest,
As Albion wails for thee: the curse of Cain
Light on his head who pierced thy innocent breast,
And scared the angel soul that was its earthly guest!

*The "Cockney" School*

A third influence at work in this second romantic generation was that consciously formed on Elizabethan and Italian lines. The group of poets which culminated in Keats desired to forget all that had been written in English verse since about 1625, and to continue the work of such Italianated poets as Fletcher and the disciples of Spenser. There can be no question

that a very prominent part in heralding this revival was taken by Charles Lamb's *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets* (1808), a book which seemed to be unnoticed at first, but which was devoured with ecstasy by several young men of good promise, and particularly by Hunt, Keats, Procter, and Beddoes. While LEIGH HUNT was being imprisoned for libelling the Prince Regent, in 1812, he made a very minute study of the *Parnaso Italiano*, and particularly of Ariosto. Between 1814 and 1818 he published several volumes, in which the Italians were closely and fervidly imitated; among these the *Story of Rimini* holds a really important place in the evolution of English poetry. Hunt was very promptly imitated by Keats, who was eleven years his junior, and in every element of genius immeasurably his superior. A certain school of critics has never been able to forgive Leigh Hunt, who, it must be admitted, lacked distinction in his writings, and taste in his personal relations; but Hunt was liberal and genial, and a genuine devotee of poetry.

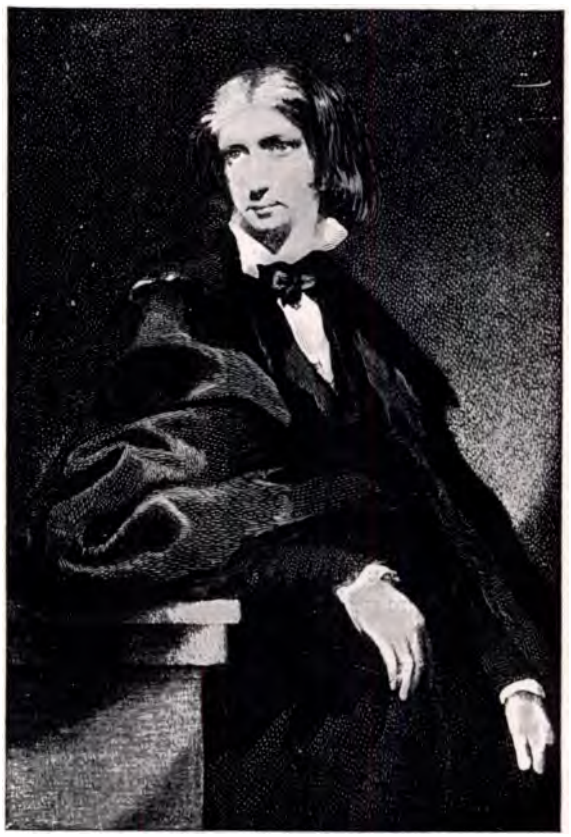
**Leigh Hunt**

*After the Portrait by B. R. Haydon*

*Leigh Hunt*

**Leigh Hunt** (1784–1859) was the son of a Barbadoes clergyman, the Rev. Isaac Hunt, and his wife, Mary Shewell of Philadelphia. He was born at Southgate, on the 19th of October 1784. His childhood was very delicate, but at the age of seven he was sent to Christ Hospital, and he stayed there till 1799. He was happy at this school, of which he has left an inimitable description, and here he began to write verses. In 1801 his father collected these into a volume called *Juvenilia*. He acted as a sort of lawyer's clerk to his elder brother Stephen until 1805, when another brother, John, having started a newspaper, Leigh became its dramatic critic. About 1806 he secured a clerkship in the War Office, which he held for two years, until the *Examiner* was founded in 1808; of this paper Leigh Hunt remained the editor until 1821. For being rude to the Prince Regent, Hunt was shut up in Surrey gaol for exactly two years from February 1813. It was during this enforced retirement, which he made as agreeable as he could, that his mind turned to the reform of English poetry on Italian models, and for the next few years he was very active in verse, publishing

*The Feast of the Poets*, 1814; *The Descent of Liberty*, 1815; *The Story of Rimini*, 1816; and *Foliage*, 1818. He was brought into close relations with Keats and Reynolds, and afterwards with Lamb, Shelley, and Byron, especially after his settling in Hampstead, and becoming the head of the "Cockney" School. In 1819–20 he published the weekly *Indicator*, from which he made a fine selection of essays in 1834. He was ill-advised to migrate to Italy in 1822, arriving at Leghorn but a few weeks before the death of Shelley. Hunt went with Byron to Genoa, and afterwards to Florence, where he edited the *Liberal*. He quarrelled with Byron, and was very miserable in Italy, where, however, he stayed in a villa at Maiano till the autumn of 1825, when he took a house at Highgate. In 1828 he did his reputation a lasting injury by publishing his interesting but most injudicious *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries*. He continued to live in the neighbourhood of London, never staying very long in any one place, much troubled by poverty and overwork, but protected against their effects by a really extraordinary optimism. He issued, always with ebullient hopes, one newspaper after another, *The Companion*, 1828; *The Chat of the Week*, 1830; *The Tatler*, 1830–1832; *Leigh Hunt's London Journal*, 1834–35; *The Monthly Repository*, 1837–38. All these ventures were failures, and Hunt's persistence in renewing the laborious and costly experiment was amazing. Most of these periodicals were written from end to end entirely by himself, and their files present almost unexplored storehouses of the prose of Leigh Hunt. Meanwhile he published a novel, *Sir Ralph Esher*, in 1832, and collected his *Poetical Works* in the same year. Fresh poems were *Captain Sword and Captain Pen*, 1834, and *The Palfrey*, 1842; in 1840 he enjoyed a real success at Covent Garden with his poetical play, *A Legend of Florence*. In 1840 to 1853 Leigh Hunt resided in Kensington, and this was the time when he compiled and published the delightful volumes by which he is now best known, such as *Imagination and Fancy*, 1844: *Men, Women, and Books*, 1847; *A Jar of Honey from Mount Hybla*, 1848, and *A Book for*



**Leigh Hunt**

*After the Portrait by Margaret Gillies*

*a Corner*, 1849. In 1847 a crown pension of £200 removed from him the constant dread of poverty, and he sat down leisurely to write his *Autobiography*, 1850. He suffered much from bereavements during the last few years of his life; but he lived on in his Hammersmith house until August 28, 1859. The most interesting fact about Leigh Hunt is the evenness of his intellectual hedonism and his unfailing cheerfulness.

**Leigh Hunt's House in Lower Cheyne Row, Chelsea**

*From a Drawing by W. N. Burgess*

He has described the mode in which his long life was spent, "reading or writing, ailing, jesting, reflecting, rarely stirring from home but to walk, interested in public events, in the progress of society, in things great or small, in the flower on my table, in the fly on my paper as I write." In person Leigh Hunt revealed his tropical parentage; he was swarthy, full-faced, and with glossy jet-black hair.

ABOU BEN ADHEM.

Abou Ben Adhem (may his tribe increase!)
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw, within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
An angel writing in a book of gold:
Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the room he said,
"What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
And with a look made of all sweet accord,
Answered, "The names of those who love the Lord."
"And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerly still; and said, "I pray thee then,
Write me as one that loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
It came again with a great wakening light,
And showed the names whom love of God had blessed,
And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

## COLOUR IN ITALY.

FROM "THE LIBERAL" (1822).

You learn for the first time in this Italian climate what colours really are. No wonder it produces painters. An English artist of any enthusiasm might shed tears of vexation, to think of the dull medium through which blue and red come to him in his own atmosphere, compared with this. One day we saw a boat pass us, which instantly reminded us of Titian, and accounted for him: and yet it contained nothing but an old boatman in a red cap, and some women with him in other colours, one of them in a bright yellow petticoat. But a red cap in Italy goes by you, not like a mere cap, much less anything vulgar or butcher-like, but like what it is, an intense specimen of the colour of red. It is like a scarlet bud in the blue atmosphere. The old boatman, with his brown hue, his white shirt, and his red cap, made a complete picture, and so did the woman and the yellow petticoat. I have seen pieces of orange-coloured silk hanging out against a wall at a dyer's, which gave the eye a pleasure truly sensual. Some of these boatmen are very fine men. I was rowed to shore one day by a man the very image of Kemble. He had nothing but his shirt on, and it was really grand to see the mixed power and gracefulness with which all his limbs came into play as he pulled the oars, occasionally turning his heroic profile to give a glance behind him at other boats.

**Leigh Hunt**

*From a Sketch by D. Maclise*

## SPRING.

FROM "WISHING-CAP PAPERS" (1824).

This morning as we sat at breakfast there came by the window, from a child's voice, a cry of "Wallflowers." There had just been a shower; sunshine had followed it; and the rain, the sun, the boy's voice, and the flowers came all so prettily together upon the subject we were thinking of, that in taking one of his roots, we could not help fancying we had received a present from Nature herself—with a penny for the bearer. There were thirty lumps of buds on this penny root; their beauty was yet to come; but the promise was there—the new life—the Spring—and the raindrops were on them, as if the sweet goddess had dipped her hand in some fountain and sprinkled them for us by way of message, as who should say, "April and I are coming."

What a beautiful word is *Spring!* At least one fancies so, knowing the meaning of it, and being used to identify it with so many pleasant things. An Italian might find it harsh, and object to the *sp* and the terminating consonant; but if he were a proper Italian, a man of fancy, the worthy countryman of Petrarch and Ariosto, we would convince him that the word was an excellent good word, crammed as full of beauty as a bud—and that *S* had the whistling of the brooks in it, *p* and *r* the force and roughness of whatsoever is animated and picturesque, *ing* the singing of the birds, and the whole word the suddenness and salience of all that is lively, sprouting, and new—Spring, Springtime, a Spring-green, a Spring of water,—to Spring—Springal, a word

for a young man in old (that is, ever new) English poetry, which with many other words has gone out, because the youthfulness of our hearts has gone out—to come back with better times, and the nine-hundredth number of the work before us.

*Keats*

Of the other writers who formed under the presidency of Hunt what was rudely called the Cockney school, J. H. Reynolds and Charles Wells had talent, but JOHN KEATS was one of the greatest poets that any country has produced. The compositions which place the name of this stable-keeper's son with those of Shakespeare and Milton were written between 1817, when his style first ceased to be stiff and affected, and 1820, when the failure of his health silenced his wonderful voice. Within this brief space of time he contrived to enrich English literature with several of the most perennially attractive narrative-poems in the language, not mere snatches of lyrical song, but pieces requiring sustained effort and a careful constructive scheme, *Endymion*, *Lamia*, the *Eve of St. Agnes*, the *Pot of Basil*, *Hyperion*. When he wrote his latest copy of verses, Keats had not completed twenty-five years of life, and it is the copious perfection of work accomplished so early, and under so many disadvantages, which is the wonder of biographers. He died unappreciated, not having persuaded Byron, Scott, or Wordsworth of his value, and being still further than Shelley was from attracting any public curiosity or admiration. His triumph was to be posthumous; it began with the magnanimous tribute of *Adonais*, and it has gone on developing and extending, until, at the present moment, it is Keats, the semi-educated surgeon's apprentice, cut down in his crude youth, who obtains the most suffrages among all the great poets of the opening quarter of the century. To a career which started with so steady a splendour, no successes should have been denied. It is poor work to speculate about might-have-beens, but the probable attainments of Keats, if he could have lived, amount, as nearly as such unfulfilled prophecies can ever do, to certainty. Byron might have become a sovereign, and Shelley would probably have descended into politics; Keats must have gone on to further and further culmination of poetic art.

**John Keats**

*From a Bust in the Chelsea Library*

Nothing in English poetry is more lovely than those passages in which Keats throws off his Cockney excesses and sings in the note of classic purity. At these moments, and they were growing more and more frequent till he ceased to write, he attains a depth of rich, voluptuous melody, by

The Eve of Saint Mark. 1819

~~It was on a twice holy day~~
~~'Twice holy was the sabbath day bell~~
Upon a sabbath day it fell
Twice holy was the sabbath bell:
That call'd the folk to evening prayer.
The City streets were clean and fair
From wholesome drench of useful rains
And on the western window panes
The chilly sunset faintly told
Of unmatured green valleys cold
Of the green thorny bloom less hedge
Of rivers new with spring tide sedge
Of Primroses by sheltered rills
And daisies on the aspurn hills.
Twice holy was the sabbath bell:
The silent streets were crowded well
With staid and pious companies
Warm from their fire side oratories.
And ~~facing~~ moving with demurest air
To even song and vesper prayer

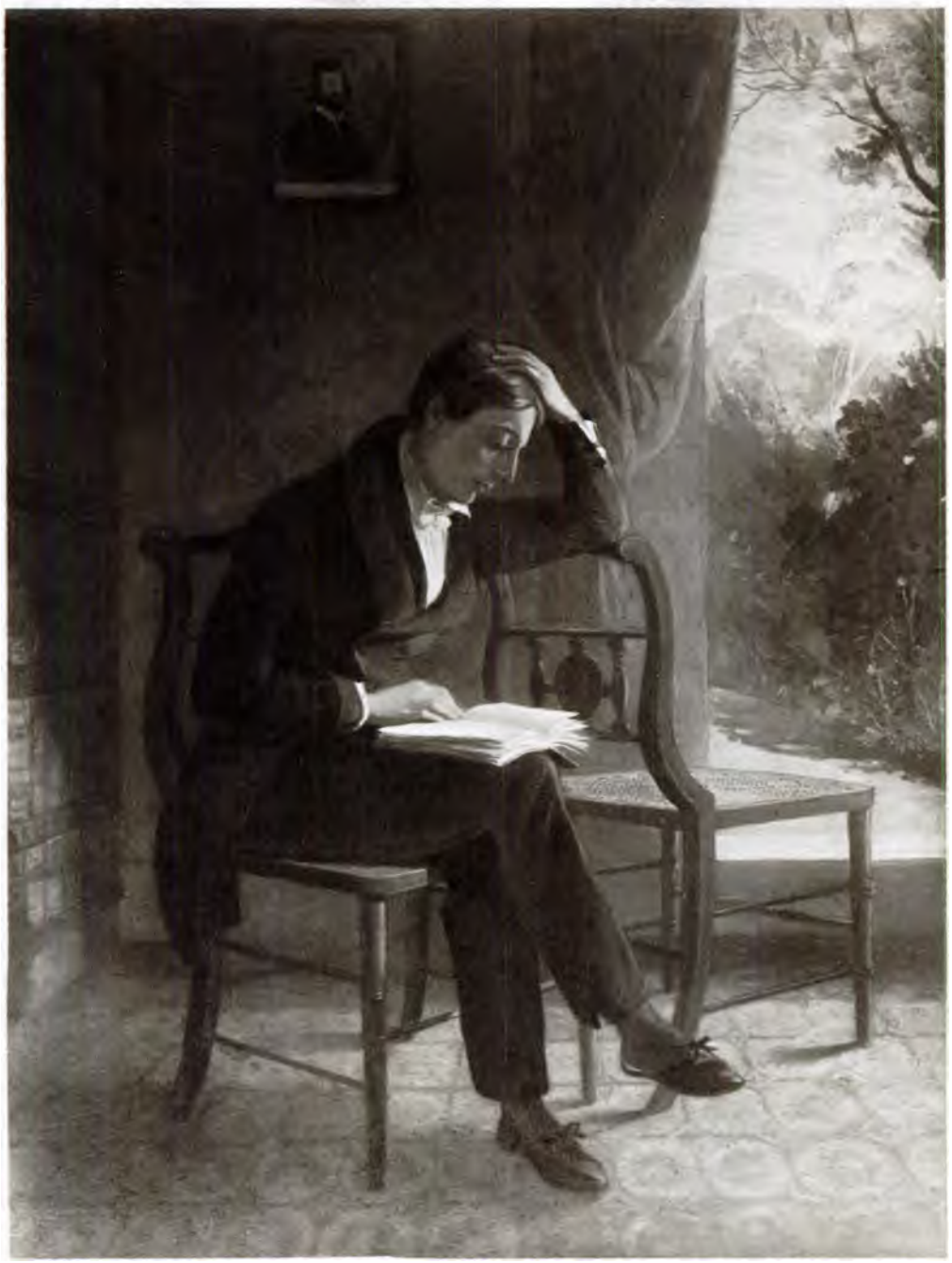
A Portion of the MS. of Keats's "Eve of Saint Mark"

the side of which Byron seems thin, and even Shelley shrill. If we define what poetry is in its fullest and deepest expression, we find ourselves describing the finest stanzas in the maturer works of Keats. His great odes, in which, perhaps, he is seen to the most advantage as an artist in verse, are Titanic and Titianic—their strength is equalled only by the glow and depth of their tone. From Spenser, from Shakespeare, from Milton, from Ariosto, he freely borrowed beauties of style, which he fused into an enamel or amalgam, no longer resembling the sources from which they were stolen, but wearing the impress of the god-like thief himself. It is probable that, marvellous as is such a fragment as *Hyperion*, it but faintly foreshadows the majesty of the style of which Keats would shortly have been master. Yet, enormous as are the disadvantages under which the existing work of Keats labours, we are scarcely conscious of them. We hold enough to prove to us how predominant the imagination was in him, how sympathetic his touch as an artist. He loved "the principle of beauty in all things," and he had already, in extreme youth, secured enough of the rich felicity of phrase and imperial illumination, which mark the maturity of great poets to hold his own with the best. No one has lived who has known better than he how to "load every rift of his subject with ore."

**John Keats**

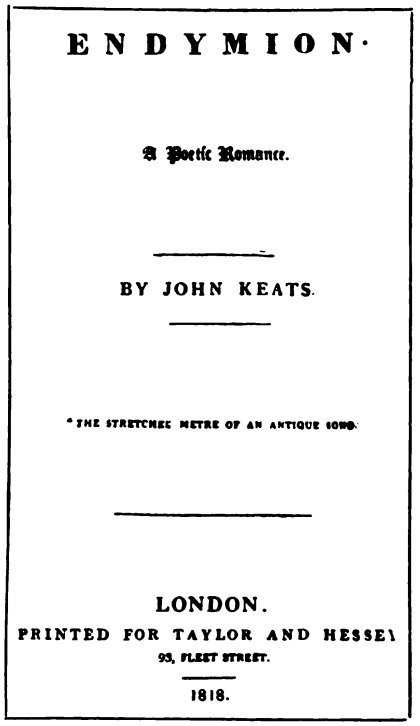
*From a Sketch by B. R. Haydon*

It is impossible, too, not to recognise that Keats has been the master-spirit in the evolution of Victorian poetry. Both Tennyson and Browning, having in childhood been enchained by Byron, and then in adolescence by Shelley, reached manhood only to transfer their allegiance to Keats, whose influence on English poetry since 1830 has been not less universal than that of Byron on the literature of the Continent. His felicities are exactly of a kind to stimulate a youthful poet to emulation, and in spite of what he owes to the Italians—to whom he went precisely as Chaucer did, to gain richness of poetical texture—the speech of Keats is full of a true British raciness. No poet, save Shakespeare himself, is more English than Keats; none presents to us in the harmony of his verse, his personal character, his letters and his general tradition, a figure more completely attractive, nor better calculated to fire the dreams of a generous successor.



JOHN KEATS.
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY JOSEPH SEVERN

**John Keats** (1795–1821) was born on the 31st (or perhaps on the 29th) of October 1795, in the stable of the Swan and Hoop Inn, Finsbury Pavement. His father, Thomas Keats, was the ostler of this livery-stable, and had married Frances Jennings, his master's daughter, whom her son described as "a woman of uncommon talents." Keats's parents were fairly well to do, and he was sent to a good school in Enfield. In 1804 his father died of a fall from his horse, and in 1805 the widow married a stable-keeper named William Rawlings, from whom she was presently separated. She withdrew with her children to Edmonton, and John continued at school at Enfield until 1810; he showed no intellectual tastes, but he was "the favourite of all, like a pet prize-fighter, for his terrier courage." Towards the close of his school years his thoughts suddenly turned to study, and he read as violently as he had previously played. Mrs. Rawlings died in February 1810, and Keats "gave way to impassioned and prolonged grief." The children were now placed in the care of guardians, who took John away from school, and bound him apprentice for five years to a surgeon in Edmonton. Keats now formed the valuable friendship of Charles Cowden Clarke, and was introduced to the poetry of Virgil and Spenser. *The Faerie Queene* awakened his genius, and at the age of seventeen he rather suddenly began to write. He had a difference of opinion with Mr. Hammond, the surgeon, and left him in 1814 to study at St. Thomas' and Guy's Hospitals. He was in London until April 1817. This was the period, of Cockney life, when Keats became an accomplished poet. His profession, however, was not neglected, and in 1816 he was appointed a dresser at Guy's. But although he was skilful he did not love the work; and after 1817 he never took up the lancet again. In the spring of 1816 Keats formed the friendship of Leigh Hunt, who exercised a strong influence in the emancipation of his temperament; through Hunt he knew J. H. Reynolds, Charles Wells, Haydon, Wordsworth, and Shelley. Keats had now determined to adopt the literary life. In this year he wrote many of his finest early sonnets, and several of his epistles. These and other verses were collected in the *Poems* of March 1817. From this volume the friends expected much, but it was a failure, and Keats withdrew to the Isle of Wight in April, and to Margate in May; he was in dejection from several sources, and not least from news that he had nearly exhausted his little fortune. At Margate, however, Keats seriously set about the composition of his *Endymion*, and in the summer he and his brothers removed to Hampstead. In the autumn of this year *Blackwood's Magazine* began its cowardly and illiterate attacks on the new school of poetry. Meanwhile Keats went steadily on with *Endymion*, which appeared in the early summer of 1818. He had already begun to write *Isabella, or The Pot of Basil*, and he had now reached the precocious maturity


ENDYMION·

A Poetic Romance.

BY JOHN KEATS.

"THE STRETCHED METRE OF AN ANTIQUE SONG.

LONDON.
PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY
93, FLEET STREET.
1818.

**Title-page of the First Edition of Keats's "Endymion"**

of his talent. He spent much of this year in Devonshire with his younger brother Tom, whose health gave him much alarm. In the summer of 1818 Keats went for a tour in the Lakes and Scotland; the weather was bad and he fatigued himself; he became so ill in ascending Ben Nevis that a doctor at Inverness forbade him to travel any more, and sent him back from Cromarty to London by sea. After this he was never quite well again. The publication of *Endymion* had by this time roused the critics; the poem was harshly treated in the *Quarterly Review*, and in *Blackwood's* with characteristic brutality, the poet being told to go back to the apothecary's shop, and "stick to plasters, pills, and ointment boxes." It is to be feared that the stain of this disgraceful article must rest on the brows of Lockhart. It was at one time believed that these attacks killed Keats; when the courage with which he received them became known, it became the fashion to deny that they had any influence on him at all. But his health was now declining rapidly, and he had many sources of depression. He was anxious for the life of his brother Tom; he was newly in love with a certain Fanny Brawne, and he was in a state of general feverishness in which such blows as those struck in the dark by Lockhart and Gifford produced a deep effect upon his physical health. But Keats was thinking most of other things: "there is an awful warmth about my heart," he said, "like a load of immortality." He was now writing with eager magnificence; to the winter of 1818 belong *The Eve of St. Agnes* and *Hyperion*. In February 1819 his engagement to Fanny Brawne was acknowledged to an inner circle of intimates, and at first it greatly stimulated his powers of composition. To the spring of that year belong most of his noblest odes, and in particular those to the "Nightingale," to "Psyche," and "On a Grecian Urn." Poverty was

**House in which Keats lived in Hampstead**

**Joseph Severn, with Inscription by himself**

beginning to press upon the poet in 1819, but he spent the summer and autumn with enjoyment at Winchester, and was steadily at work on *Lamia* and *Otho;* these, as Mr. Colvin says, "were the last good days of his life." In October Keats came up to lodgings in London, hoping to find employment. In a very few days he moved to Wentworth Place, Hampstead, in order to be near Fanny Brawne. He now set about remodelling *Hyperion*, but towards the end of January 1820, after being chilled on the top of a coach, the fatal malady revealed itself. After this his energy greatly declined, and he wrote little. In July the famous volume containing *Lamia* and the rest of his later poems was published, and won some moderate praise for him for the first time. His

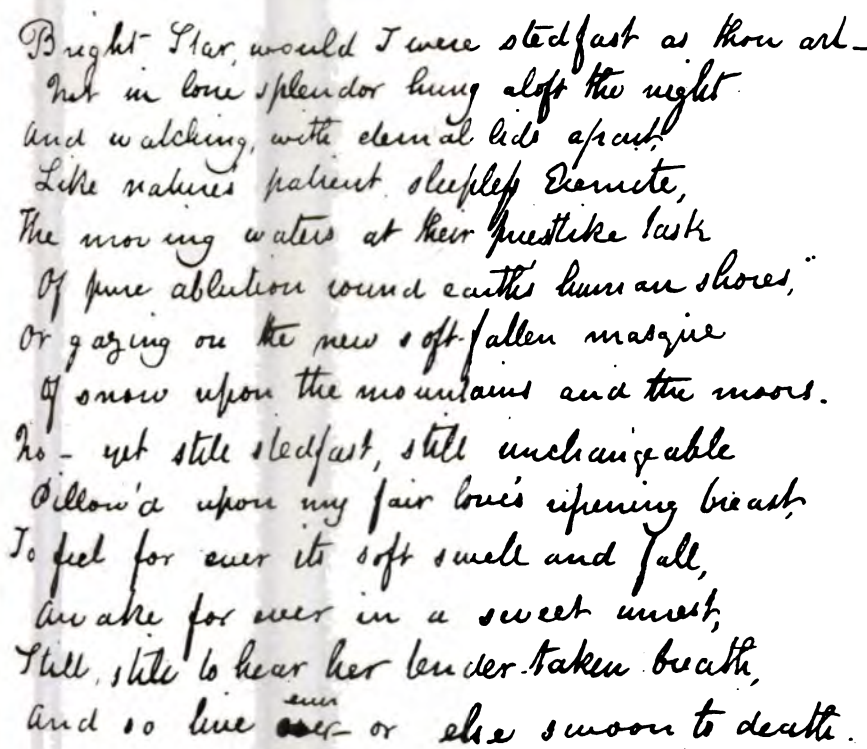
**Keats's Grave in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome**

**Memorial to Joseph Severn in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome**

condition now gave his friends the deepest alarm, and just as they were wondering how to avoid for Keats a winter in England, an invitation came from the Shelleys begging him to come and live with them at Pisa. With Shelley and his poetry Keats had little sympathy, and he could not bring himself to accept, or even very graciously to respond to, Shelley's hospitable kindness. But the invitation deepened in his mind the attraction of Italy, and in September he started, with the painter Joseph Severn, for Naples. The weather was rough in the Channel, and Keats came ashore; on the 1st of October 1820, being near Lulworth, he wrote the sonnet, "Bright Star," his last verses. On the arrival of the friends, Shelley again warmly pressed Keats to come to Pisa, but he preferred Rome, and he settled with Severn in lodgings in the Piazza di Spagna. Through November Keats was much better, but December brought a relapse: he was

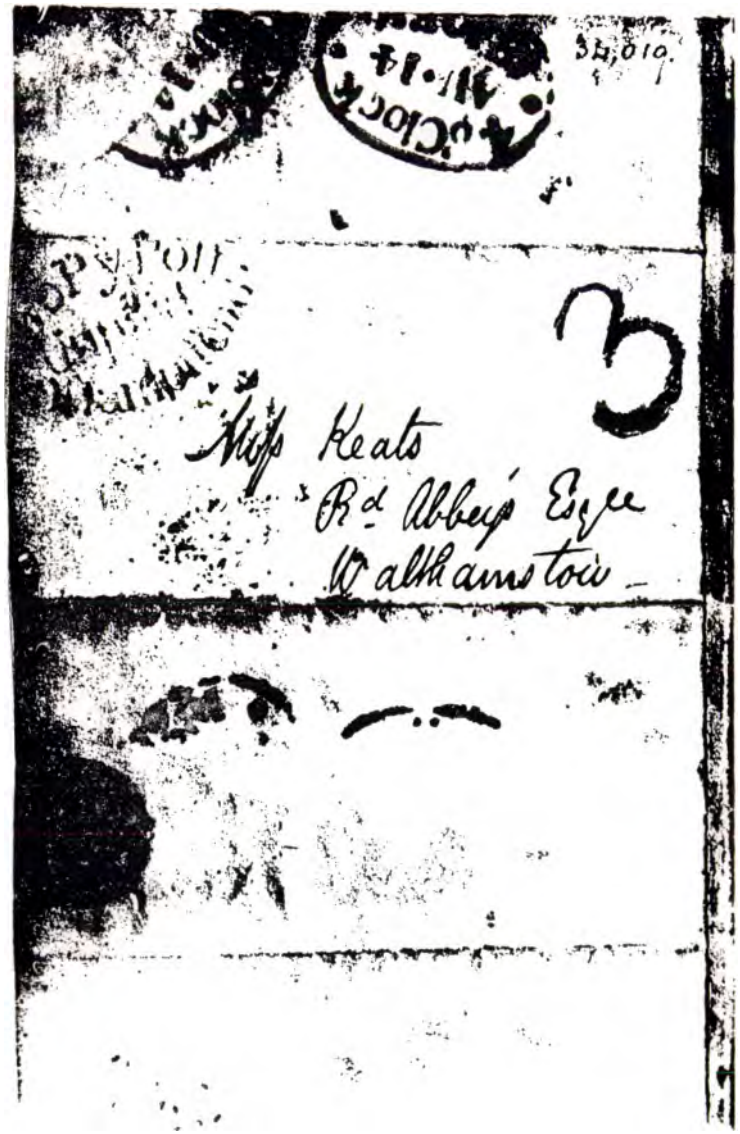
distressed no less in mind than body, although admirably nursed all the while by the devoted Severn; but on the 23rd of February 1821, he was released at last from his sufferings. He was buried in the Protestant Cemetery, near the pyramid of Caius Cestius. Of Keats in his mature youth we have many and most attractive descriptions. He was short and thick-set, with a powerful frame; his head was clustered round with thick waves of golden brown or auburn hair. His eyes impressed every one with their marvellous beauty; they "seemed to have looked upon some glorious vision," Mrs. Procter said. Leigh Hunt describes them, more precisely, as "mellow and glowing, large, dark and sensitive." Until the disease undermined it, he had unusual physical strength, and in early years much pugnacity in the display of it, although he was excessively amenable to tenderness and friendship. He had "a nature all tingling with pride and sensitiveness," and an "exquisite sense of the luxurious"; and he speaks of the violence of his temperament, continually smothered up. His ardour, his misfortunes, and his genius, have made him a figure incomparably attractive to all young enthusiasts since his day, and no figure in English literature is more romantically beloved.

**Mask of Keats**
*Taken from the life by Haydon*



Bright Star, would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendor hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors.
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft swell and fall,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

**Facsimile MS. of Keats's last Sonnet**




Wentworth Place.

My dear Fanny, 14 aug 20 81

'Tis a long time since I received your last. An accident of an unpleasant nature occured at Mr Hunt's and prevented me from answering you, that is to say made me nervous. That you may not suppose it worse I will mention that some one of Mr Hunt's household opened a Letter of mine - upon which I immediately left Mortimer Terrace, with the intention of taking to Mr Bentleys again, fortunately I am not in so base a situation, but am

staying a short time with Mrs. Brawne who lives in the House which was Mr Dilke's. I am excessively nervous. a person I am not quite used to entering the room half chokes me. I is not yet Consumption I believe but it would be were I to remain in this climate all the Winter. so I am thinking of either voyaging or travelling to Italy Yesterday I received an invitation from Mr Shelley a Gentleman residing at Pisa, to spend the Winter with him if I go I must be away in a Month or even less. I am glad you like the Poems

you must hope with me & time and health will pro you some more. This is the first morning I have been able to sit to the paper and have ma my Letter to write if I can manage them. God bless you 82
my dear Sister.

Your affectionate Brother
John.

## Ode on a Grecian Urn.

Thou still unravished bride of quietness,
  Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,
Sylvan historian, who canst thus express
  A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
  Of deities, or mortals, or of both,
    In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
  What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
  What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
  Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared,
  Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone!
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave
  Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;
    Bold lover, never, never canst thou kiss,
Though winning near the goal—yet, do not grieve;
  She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss;
    For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed
  Your leaves, nor ever bid the spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
  For ever piping songs for ever new;
More happy love! more happy, happy love!
  For ever warm and still to be enjoyed,
    For ever panting, and for ever young;
All breathing human passion far above,
  That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and cloyed,
    A burning forehead, and a parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
  To what green altar, O mysterious priest,
Lead'st thou that heifer lowing at the skies,
  And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea-shore,
  Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
    Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for evermore
  Will silent be; and not a soul to tell
    Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
  Of marble men and maidens overwrought,
With forest branches and the trodden weed;
  Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought
As doth eternity: cold Pastoral!
  When old age shall this generation waste,
    Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou sayest,
  "Beauty is truth, truth beauty,"—that is all
    Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

### To Homer.

Standing aloof in giant ignorance,
  Of thee I hear and of the Cyclades,
As one who sits ashore and longs perchance
  To visit dolphin-coral in deep seas.
So, thou wast blind!—but then the veil was rent;
  For Jove uncurtained Heaven to let thee live,
And Neptune made for thee a spumy tent,
  And Pan made sing for thee his forest-hive;
Aye, on the shores of darkness there is light,
  And precipices show untrodden green;
There is a budding morrow in midnight;
  There is a triple sight in blindness keen;
Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befel
To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.

### From "Hyperion," Book II.

Thus in alternate uproar and sad peace
Amazèd were those Titans utterly.
O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their woes;
For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire:
A solitary sorrow best befits
Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.
Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find
Many a fallen old Divinity
Wandering in vain about bewildered shores.
Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,
And not a wind of heaven but will breathe
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute!
For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.
Flush everything that hath a vermeil hue;
Let the rose glow intense and warm the air;
And let the clouds of even and of morn
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills;
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,
Cold as a bubbling well; let faint-lipped shells
On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion turn
Through all their labyrinths; and let the maid
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surprised.
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,
And hazels thick, dark-stemmed beneath the shade;
Apollo is once more the golden theme!

### Sonnet.

Why did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell:
  No God, no Demon of severe response,
Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.
  Then to my human heart I turn at once.

Heart! Thou and I are here, sad and alone;
I say, why did I laugh? O mortal pain!
O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I moan,
To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in vain.
Why did I laugh? I know this Being's lease,
My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;
Yet would I on this very midnight cease,
And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds;
Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,
But Death intenser—Death is Life's high meed.

### Faery Song.

Shed no tear! oh shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Weep no more! oh weep no more!
Young buds sleep in the root's white core.
Dry your eyes! oh dry your eyes!
For I was taught in Paradise
To ease my breast of melodies—
Shed no tear.

Overhead! look overhead!
'Mong the blossoms white and red—
Look up, look up. I flutter now
On this flush pomegranate bough.
See me! 'tis this silvery bill
Ever cures the good man's ill.
Shed no tear! Oh, shed no tear!
The flower will bloom another year.
Adieu, adieu!—I fly, adieu!
I vanish in the heaven's blue—
Adieu! Adieu!

### Song.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy tree!
Thy branches ne'er remember
Their green felicity;
The north cannot undo them
With a sleepy whistle through them,
Nor frozen thawings glue them
From budding at the prime.

In a drear-nighted December,
Too happy, happy brook!
Thy bubblings ne'er remember
Apollo's summer look;
But, with a sweet forgetting,
They stay their crystal fretting,
Never, never petting
About the frozen time.

Ah, would 'twere so with many
A gentle girl and boy!
But were there ever any
Writhed not at passèd joy?
To know the change and feel it
When there is none to heal it,
Nor numbèd sense to steel it,
Was never said in rhyme.

KEATS' LAST SONNET.

Bright star! would I were steadfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night,
And watching with eternal lids apart,
Like Nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still steadfast, still unchangeable,
Pillowed upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

**John Hamilton Reynolds** (1796–1852), a lawyer, was the friend of Keats and later of Hood, and is typical of the Cockney school of poets in its less inspired moments. His best work was a romantic poem, *The Garden of Florence*, 1821; but he also published a skit on Wordsworth's *Peter Bell* in 1819, and a very brilliant apology for prize-fighting, in prose and verse, called *The Fancy*, 1820. **Charles Jeremiah Wells** (1800–1879) belonged to the same group, but left it early. His drama entitled *Joseph and his Brethren* appeared in 1824. Wells was daunted by want of recognition and withdrew to France, breaking off all commerce with his old friends, most of whom he long survived. A reply of Potiphar's wife, Phraxanor, has been universally admired for its "quiet, heavy malice, worthy of Shakespeare"[1]; Joseph cries:—

Let me pass out at door.

And Phraxanor answers:—

I have a mind
You shall at once walk with those honest limbs
Into your grave.

*Moore* The friend and biographer of Byron, THOMAS MOORE, was in sympathy with the poets of revolution, and was long associated with them in popular estimation. At the present moment Moore is extremely disdained by the critics, and has the greatest possible difficulty in obtaining a fair hearing. He is scarcely mentioned, save to be decried and ridiculed. This is a reaction against the reputation which Moore long continued to enjoy on

[1] Mr. Swinburne, in his "Prefatory Note" to the 1876 reprint of *Joseph and his Brethren*.

rather slight grounds, but it is excessive. As a lyrical satirist, his lightness of touch and buoyant wit give an Horatian flavour to those collections of epistles and fables of which *The Fudge Family in Paris* began a series. But the little giddy bard had a serious side; he was profoundly incensed at the unsympathetic treatment of his native island by England, and he seized the "dear harp of his country" in an amiable frenzy of Hibernian sentiment. The result was a huge body of songs and ballads, the bulk of which are now, indeed, worthless, but out of which a careful hand can select eight or ten that defy the action of time, and preserve their wild, undulating melancholy, their sound as of bells dying away in the distance. The artificial prettiness and smoothness of Moore are seen to perfection in his chain of Oriental romances, *Lalla Rookh*, and these, it is to be feared, are tarnished beyond all recovery.

**Thomas Moore**

*After the Portrait by Sir Thomas Lawrence*

**Moore's Birthplace in Dublin**

**Thomas Moore** (1779–1852) was the son of a grocer and spirit-dealer, a Kerry man and a Catholic, who kept a shop in Little Aungier Street, Dublin, where Moore was born on the 28th of May 1779. He was educated at Samuel Whyte's grammar school in Dublin. In 1794 he proceeded to Trinity College, and here Robert Emmett was his close friend. He early gained a great reputation for his brilliant skill in musical improvisation. He was very nearly involved in the United Ireland Conspiracy, and it was perhaps to escape suspicion that he came to London in 1799, becoming a student at the Middle Temple. In 1800 appeared his *Odes of Anacreon*, and in 1801 his *Poems of the late Thomas Little*, in which pseudonym he made an allusion to his own diminutive stature. Moore was taken at once to the bosom of English fashionable society, and through the influence of his friend,

Lord Moira, was made in 1803 Admiralty Registrar at Bermuda. He went out, but soon left a deputy behind him to do the work, and passed on to travel in the United States. In 1806 Moore published his *Odes and Epistles*, which were savagely reviewed in the "Edinburgh"; Moore, in consequence, challenged Jeffrey to a duel at Chalk Farm. This ridiculous incident increased Moore's fashionable notoriety, and with Jeffrey he struck up a warm friendship. In 1807 he began the publication of his *Irish Melodies*, the tenth and last instalment of which did not appear until 1834: for this work Moore was paid nearly £13,000. In 1811 Moore formed the friendship of Byron, and married a young actress, Bessie Dyke; the young couple settled at Kegworth, in Leicestershire. *The Twopenny Post-Bag* belongs to 1813, the *Elegy on Sheridan* to 1816. In 1817 appeared *Lalla Rookh*, for which Longman gave a sum larger than had ever previously been given for a single poem, £3000. The success of this narrative was not unwelcome, for in 1818 a dreadful calamity fell upon Moore; his deputy in Bermuda absconded, leaving the poet responsible for £6000. Moore was obliged to quit England until he could arrange his affairs, and until 1822 he resided in France and Italy. During this period of exile he wrote abundantly, and to it belong the publication of *The Fudge Family in Paris* (1818), and *Rhymes on the Road* (1823). Lord Lansdowne persuaded the Admiralty to reduce the debt to £1000; this Moore was able to pay, and returned to London. His marriage was in the highest degree a happy and united one, but his wife and he had the deep sorrow of seeing their five children die before them. Moore brought with him from Paris *The Loves of the Angels*, which was published in 1823. He settled, to be near Lord Lansdowne, at Bowood, in the cottage at Sloperton in Wiltshire, where he had been residing at the time of his misfortunes. His next works of importance were the *Life of Sheridan* in 1825, the romance of *The Epicurean* in 1827, and the *Life and Letters of Byron* in 1830. He now wasted several years in an attempt to write an encyclopedic history of Ireland: he was overwhelmed with the task, and before it was completed his health and mind gave way. In 1846, after the death of his only surviving child, he sank into a state of mental infirmity. In this pitiable condition he lingered until the 25th of February 1852, when he died at Sloperton Cottage, and was buried at Bromham. Moore was a small, brisk man of great sociable accomplishment, an amiable spendthrift, a butterfly of the salons, yet an honest, good, and loyal friend. His foible was a too frivolous penchant for the pleasures of life; and even in his patriotism, which was sincere, and in his religion, which was deep, he affected a somewhat over-playful roguishness.

**A View of Bermuda**

**Moore's Cottage at Sloperton**

FROM "IRISH MELODIES."

At the mid hour of night, when stars are weeping, I fly
To the lone vale we lov'd, when life shone warm in thine eye ;
  And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the regions of air
  To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come to me there,
And tell me our love is remembered, even in the sky.

Then I sang the wild song 'twas once such pleasure to hear !
When our voices commingling breathed, like one, on the ear ;
  And, as Echo far off through the vale my sad orison rolls,
  I think, oh my love ! 'tis thy voice from the Kingdom of Souls,
Faintly answering still the notes that once were so dear.

TO IRELAND.

When he who adores thee has left but the name
  Of his fault and his sorrows behind,
Oh ! say wilt thou weep, when they darken the fame
  Of a life that for thee was resigned ?
Yes, weep, and however my foes may condemn,
  Thy tears shall efface their decree ;
For Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
  I have been but too faithful to thee.

With thee were the dreams of my earliest love ;
  Every thought of my reason was thine ;
In my last humble prayer to the Spirit above,
  Thy name shall be mingled with mine.
Oh ! blest are the lovers and friends who shall live
  The days of thy glory to see ;
But the next dearest blessing that Heaven can give
  Is the pride of thus dying for thee.

*Rogers*

The five years from 1816 to 1821 were the culminating years of the romantic movement. The spirit of poetry invaded every department of English ; there were birds in every bush, and wild music burdened every bough. In particular, several writers of an older school, whom the early movement of Wordsworth and Coleridge had silenced, felt themselves irresistibly moved to sing once more, and swell the new choir with their old voices ; it was *cras amet qui nunquam amavit, quique amavit cras amet.* Among those who had loved more than twenty years before was SAMUEL ROGERS, who came forward with a *Jacqueline* bound up with Byron's *Lara*—strange incongruity, a Methody spinster on the arm of a dashing dragoon. Save on this solitary occasion, however, the amiable Muse of Rogers never forgot what was due to her

**Samuel Rogers**

*After the Portrait by G. Richmond*

self-respect, and clung close to the manner of Goldsmith, slowly and faintly relaxing the rigour of versification in a blank verse *Italy*, but never, in a single graceful line, quite reaching the point of poetry.

**Samuel Rogers**

*From a Caricature*

**Samuel Rogers** (1763–1855) was one of the eight children of Thomas Rogers, the son of a glass manufacturer of Stourbridge, and his wife Mary Radford; he was born in his father's London house on Newington Green, on the 30th of July 1763. Rogers was sent to private schools at Hackney; at a very early age he entered the bank in London of which his father possessed a share. In the last year of Dr. Johnson's life, Rogers went to call on that great man, but when he had his hand on the knocker his courage failed, and he retreated. His mind was, however, by this time wholly given to literature, and in 1786 he published his first volume, *An Ode to Superstition*, with other poems. In 1789 he rode from London to Edinburgh on a literary expedition to the Northern wits, and was warmly received; but missed seeing Burns. In 1792 Rogers published *The Pleasures of Memory*, which achieved a great success. Until the death of his father in 1793 Rogers had continued to live with his father in the Newington Green house; he inherited the principal interest in the banking house, and the rest of the family dispersing, he began to live at Newington in the style of a wealthy man. In 1798 he published his *Epistle to a Friend*, and sold the house which had hitherto been his home. He settled in London, and began to cut a prominent figure in society. He presently built a house in St. James's Place overlooking Green Park, which he fitted up with exquisite specimens of antique art and furniture; here he entertained the world and his friends, of whom Fox and Lord and Lady Holland were among the most intimate. In 1810, after a long silence, he circulated his poem *Columbus*, and collected his *Poems* in 1812. Rogers now became closely associated with Byron, and his narrative poem called *Jacqueline* appeared in the same volume with *Lara* in 1814. A didactic piece, *Human Life*, was printed in 1819, and in 1822 the first part of *Italy*,

**Drawing by Thomas Stothard for Rogers' "Pleasures of Memory"**

**Drawing by Thomas Stothard for Rogers' "Pleasures of Memory"**

which was concluded in 1828. These volumes did not sell well, but in 1830 Rogers reissued *Italy* with magnificent plates by Turner, and in 1834 his poems in two volumes. On these ventures he expended £14,000, but the sales were so large that the entire sum was refunded to him. His pride was to know "everybody," and he lived so long that the man who had called on Dr. Johnson was able to give his blessing to Mr. Algernon Swinburne. In 1850 he was offered the Poet Laureateship, but refused it on the score of age, yet he lived on until the 18th of December 1855.

FROM "ITALY."

"Boy, call the gondola; the sun is set."
It came, and we embarked; but instantly,
As at the waving of a magic wand,
Though she had stept on board so light of foot,
So light of heart, laughing she knew not why,
Sleep overcame her; on my arm she slept.
From time to time I waked her; but the boat
Rocked her to sleep again. The moon was now
Rising full-orbed, but broken by a cloud,
The wind was hushed, and the sea mirror-like.
A single zephyr, as enamoured, played
With her loose tresses, and drew more and more
Her veil across her bosom. Long I lay
Contemplating that face so beautiful,
That rosy mouth, that cheek dimpled with smiles,
That neck but half concealed, whiter than snow.
'Twas the sweet slumber of her early age.
I looked and looked, and felt a flush of joy
I would express but cannot. Oft I wished
Gently—by stealth—to drop asleep myself,
And to incline yet lower that sleep might come;
Oft closed my eyes as in forgetfulness.
'Twas all in vain. Love would not let me rest.

The other revenant, GEORGE CRABBE, did better. After a silence almost unbroken for two-and-twenty years, he resumed his sturdy rhyming in 1807, and in 1810 enriched the language with a poem of really solid merit, the *Borough*, a picture of social and physical conditions in a seaside town on the Eastern Coast. Crabbe never excelled, perhaps never equalled, this saturnine study of the miseries of provincial life; like his own watchman, the poet seems to have no other design than to "let in truth, terror, and the day." Crabbe was essentially a writer of the eighteenth century, bound close by the versification of Churchill and those who, looking past Pope, tried to revive the vehement music of Dryden; his attitude to life and experience, too, was of the age of 1780. Yet he showed the influence of romanticism and of his contemporaries in the exactitude of his natural observation and his Dutch niceness in the choice of nouns. He avoided, almost as carefully as Wordsworth himself, the vague sonorous synonym which continues the sound while adding nothing to the sense. As Tenny-

son used to say, "Crabbe has a world of his own," and his plain, strong, unaffected poetry will always retain a certain number of admirers.

This second generation of romanticism was marked by a development of critical writing which was of the very highest importance. It may indeed be said, without much exaggeration, that at this time literary criticism, in the modern sense, was first seriously exercised in England. In other words, the old pseudo-classic philosophy of literature, founded on the misinterpretation of Aristotle, was completely obsolete; while the rude, positive expression of baseless opinion with which the *Edinburgh* and the *Quarterly* had started, had broken down, leaving room for a new sensitive criticism founded on comparison with ancient and exotic types of style, a sympathetic study of nature, and a genuine desire to appreciate the writer's contribution on its own merits. Of this new and fertile school of critics, Coleridge, Hazlitt, Leigh Hunt, and Lamb were the leaders.

It is noticeable that the utterances of these writers which have made their names famous were, as a rule, written on occasion, and in consequence of an opportunity which came seldom and as a rule came late. Leigh Hunt's best work in criticism dates from 1808 until 1840 indeed, but only because during those years he possessed or influenced successive journals in which he was free to speak his mind. WILLIAM HAZLITT, on the other hand, was thirty-five years of age before his introduction to the *Edinburgh Review* enabled him in 1814 to begin his articles on the English comic writers. To the accident that Hazlitt was invited to lecture at the Surrey Institution we owe his *English Poets* and his essays on Elizabethan literature. Lamb and De Quincey found little vehicle for their ideas until the periodical called *The London Magazine* was issued in 1820; here the *Essays of Elia* and the *Opium-Eater* were published, and here lesser writers, and later Carlyle himself with his *Life and Writings of Schiller*, found a sympathetic asylum. It was therefore to the development and the increased refinement of periodical literature that the new criticism was most indebted, and newspapers of a comparatively humble order, without wealth or influence behind them, did that for literature which the great Quarterly Reviews, with their insolence and their sciolism, had conspicuously failed to achieve.

*Lamb* With the definite analysis of literary productions we combine here, as being closely allied to it, the criticism of life contributed by all these essayists, but pre-eminently by CHARLES LAMB. This, perhaps the most beloved of English authors, with all his sufferings bravely borne, his long-drawn sorrows made light of in a fantastic jest, was the associate of the Lake poets at the outset of their career. He accepted their principles although he wholly lacked their exaltation in the presence of nature, and was essentially an urban, not a rural talent, though the tale of *Rosamund Gray* may seem to belie the judgment. The poetry of his youth was not very successful, and in the first decade of the century Lamb sank to contributing facetious ana to the newspapers at sixpence a joke. His delicate *Tales from Shakespeare* and the *Specimens* of 1808, of which we have already spoken, kept his memory

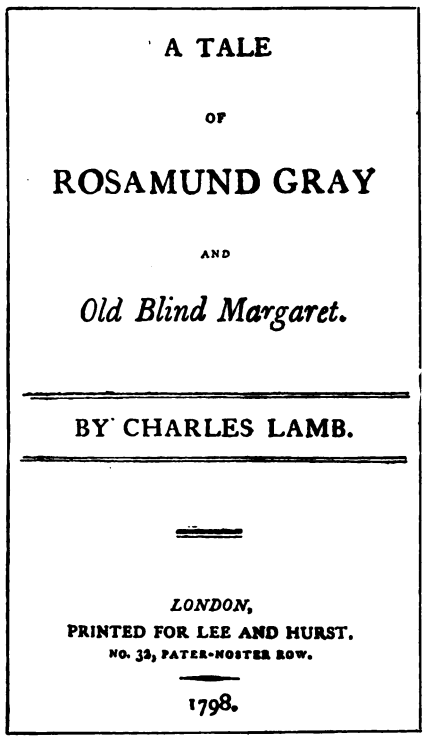
before the minds of his friends, and helped to bring in a new era of thought by influencing a few young minds. Meanwhile he was sending to certain fortunate correspondents those divine epistles which, since their publication in 1837, have placed Lamb in the front rank of English letter-writers. But still he was unknown, and remained so until the young publisher Ollier was persuaded to venture on a collection of Lamb's scattered writings. At last, at the age of forty-five, he began to immortalise himself with those *Essays of Elia*, of which the opening series was ultimately given to the world as a volume in 1823.

**Charles Lamb**

*After the Portrait by Robert Hancock*

**Charles Lamb** (1775–1834) was the youngest of the seven children of John Lamb, the confidential servant of one of the Benchers of the Inner Temple, and was born on the 10th of February 1775, in Crown Office Row. "I was born," says Lamb, "and passed the first seven years of my life in the Temple. Its church, its halls, its fountains, its river—these are of my oldest recollections." In 1782 he entered Christ's Hospital, and remained there until 1789; at the same school was "a poor friendless boy," called S. T. Coleridge, with whom Lamb formed a lifelong friendship. Of his six brothers and sisters only two now survived—John and Mary, both much older than Charles. About 1792 the latter obtained an appointment in the South Sea House, and was presently promoted to be a clerk in the accountant's office of the India House. In 1796 **Mary Lamb** (1764–1847), whose mental health had given cause for anxiety, went mad and stabbed their mother to death at the dinner-table. Charles was appointed her guardian, and for the rest of his life he devoted himself to her care. Four sonnets by Lamb ("C. L.") were included in Coleridge's *Poems on Various Subjects* (1796), and the romance of *Rosamund Gray* appeared in 1798. In the spring of 1799 Lamb's aged father died, and, Mary having partly recovered, the solitary pair occupied lodgings in Pentonville. From these they were ejected in 1800, but found shelter in a set of three rooms in Southampton Buildings, Holborn. Hence they moved to Mitre Court Buildings, in the Temple, where they lived very noiselessly until 1809, when they removed to Inner Temple Lane. The poetical drama called *John Woodvil* was printed in 1802; and poverty soon forced Charles to become in 1803–4 a contributor of puns and squibs to the *Morning Post*. In 1806 his farce of *Mr. H.* was acted with ignominious want of success at Drury Lane. Charles and Mary

continued to produce their *Tales from Shakespeare* and *Mrs. Leicester's School* in 1807, and for the first time tasted something like popularity. *The Adventures of Ulysses* followed in 1808, and the more important *Specimens of the English Dramatic Poets*. The next nine years, spent in Inner Temple Lane, were not eventful; Charles wrote little and published less; the poverty of the pair was not so pressing as it had been, but the malady of Mary recurred with distressing frequency. However, as Charles said in 1815, "the wind was tempered to the shorn Lambs," and on the whole they seem to have been happy. In 1817 they left the Temple and took a lodging in Russell Street, Covent Garden, on the site of Will's Coffee-House. Charles collected his *Works* in two volumes in 1818, and this date closes the earlier and less distinguished half of his career. In 1820 the foundation of *The London Magazine* offered Lamb an opportunity for the free exercise of his characteristic humour and philosophy, and in the month of August he began to contribute essays to it. By 1823 so many of these easy, desultory articles had appeared that a volume was made of them, entitled *Elia* (pronounced "Ellia"); this is now usually spoken of as the *Essays of Elia*. This delightful book was received with a chorus of praise. Charles Lamb was now more prosperous, and his sister and he dared for the first time to take a house of their own, a cottage in Colebrook Row, Islington, and they adopted a charming little girl, Emma Isola, who brightened their lonely fireside. Charles had long fretted under the bondage of his work at the India House, where he had now served thirty-three years. The Directors met his wishes with marked generosity, and he retired on the very handsome pension of £450 a year. He wrote to Wordsworth on the 6th of April 1825: "I came home for *ever* on Tuesday in last week," and "it was like passing from life into eternity." It is doubtful, however, whether the sudden abandonment of all regular employment was good for Lamb; but in 1826 he worked almost daily at the British Museum, which kept him in health. In 1830 he published a volume of *Album Verses*, soon after boarding with a family at Enfield. A final change of residence was made to Bay Cottage, Edmonton, in 1833; in this year the *Last Essays of Elia* were published, and the loneliness of the ageing brother and sister was enhanced by the marriage of Emma Isola. The death of Coleridge greatly affected Charles Lamb, who was now in failing health; he wrote of Coleridge, "his great and dear spirit haunts me," and he did not long survive. Charles Lamb died at Edmonton on the 27th of December 1834, with the names of the friends he had loved best murmured


A TALE

OF

ROSAMUND GRAY

AND

*Old Blind Margaret.*

BY CHARLES LAMB.

*LONDON,*
PRINTED FOR LEE AND HURST.
NO. 32, PATER-NOSTER ROW.

1798.

**Title-page of the First Edition of Lamb's "Tale of Rosamund Gray"**

CHARLES LAMB.

After the Portrait by William Hazlitt

CHARLES LAMB.

After the Portrait by William Hazlitt

With the decay of my first innocence, I confess a less and less relish daily for those innocuous cates. The whole vegetable tribe have lost their gust with me. Only I stick to asparagus, which still seems to inspire gentle thoughts. I am impatient and querulous under culinary disappointments, as to come home at the dinner-hour, for instance, expecting some savoury mess, and to find one quite tasteless and sapidless. Butter ill melted—that commonest of kitchen failures—puts me beside my tenour.—The author of the Rambler used to make inarticulate animal noises over a favourite food. Was this the music quite proper to be preceded by the grace? or would the pious man have done better to postpone his devotions to a season when the blessing might be contemplated with less

**Charles Lamb**

*From a Sketch by Brook Pulham*

**The Cottage at Edmonton where Charles Lamb died**

perturbation? I quarrel with no man's tastes, nor would set my thin face against those excellent things, in their way, jollity and feasting. But as these exercises, however laudable, have little in them of grace or gracefulness, a man should be sure, before he ventures so to grace them, that while he is pretending his devotions otherwhere, he is not secretly kissing his hand to some great fish—his Dagon—with a special consecration of no ark but the fat tureen before him. Graces are the sweet preluding strains to the banquets of angels and children; to the roots and severer repasts of the Chartreuse: to the slender, but not slenderly acknowledged, refection of the poor and humble man: but at the heaped-up boards of the pampered and the luxurious they become of dissonant mood, less timed and tuned to the occasion, methinks, than the noise of those better befitting organs would be, which children hear tales of at Hog's Norton.

CHARLES LAMB.

After the Portrait by William Hazlitt

from his lips. He is of all English authors, perhaps, the one whose memory is kept alive with the greatest personal affection, and this although his own vitality was low and intermittent. He was very short in stature, with a large hooked nose, and "almost immaterial legs," a tiny tapering figure that dwindled from the large head to the tiny gaitered ankles. "He had a long, melancholy face, with keen, penetrating eyes," and a "bland sweet smile with a touch of sadness in it." He described himself as "a Quaker in black," as "terribly shy," and as one "whose conceptions rose kindlier than his utterances," but in truth he appears to have been the most enchanting of boon companions, and, in spite of an inveterate habit of stammering, the joy and the light of every cheerful company. Of his goodness of heart, his simplicity and his unselfishness, we have testimony from every one of those whose privilege it was to know him.

**East India House, where Lamb worked for more than thirty years**

FROM "GRACE BEFORE MEAT" (*Elia*).

I am no Quaker at my food. I confess I am not indifferent to the kinds of it. Those unctuous morsels of deer's flesh were not made to be received with dispassionate services. I hate a man who swallows it, affecting not to know what he is eating. I suspect his taste in higher matters. I shrink instinctively from one who professes to like minced veal. There is a physiognomical character in the tastes for food. Coleridge holds that a man cannot have a pure mind who refuses apple-dumplings. I am not certain but he is right.

**Charles and Mary Lamb**

*After the Portrait by F. S. Cary*

Mackery End in Hertfordshire, the subject of one of Lamb's Essays

*From a Pencil Sketch*

Dear Fugue-ist,
or hearst thou rather
Contrapuntist—?

We expect you four (as many as the Table will hold without squeezing) at Mrs Westwood's Table D'Hote on Thursday. You will find the White Horse shut up, and us moved under the wing of the Phoenix, which gives us friendly refuge. Beds for guests, marry, we have none, but cleanly accommodings at the Crown & [illegible] Horseshoe.

Yours harmonically.

C L

A Facsimile Letter from Charles Lamb to his Friend Novello

—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young Mirandula), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblichus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar, while the walls of the old Grey Friars re-echoed to the accents of the *inspired charity boy!*

*De Quincey*

The career of THOMAS DE QUINCEY began even later, and was even more obscure. Ten years younger than Lamb, and like him an admirer and disciple of Wordsworth and Coleridge, De Quincey made no serious attempt to excel in verse, and started in prose not earlier than, as has been already noted, 1821, the book of the *Opium-Eater* appearing anonymously the following year. He had now put out from shore, and we find him for the future, practically until his death, swimming "in the midst of a German Ocean of literature," and rarely consenting to quit the pen. His collected works, with difficulty saved, just before his end, out of a chaos of anonymity, first revealed to the general public the quality of this astonishing author. In the same way, to chronicle what Wilson contributed to literature is mainly to hunt for *Noctes Ambrosianæ* in the files of *Blackwood's Magazine*. To each of these critical writers, diverse in taste and character, yet all the children of the new romantic movement, the advance of the higher journalism was the accident which brought that to the surface which might otherwise have died in them unfertilised and unperceived.

**Thomas De Quincey**

*After the Portrait by Sir J. Watson Gordon*

Of this group of writers, two are now found to be predominant—Lamb for the humour and humanity of his substance, De Quincey for the extraordinary opportunity given by his form for the discussion of the elements of style. Of the latter writer it has been said that "he languished with a sort of

despairing nympholepsy after intellectual pleasures." His manner of writing was at once extremely splendid and extremely precise. He added to literature several branches or provinces which had up to his day scarcely been cultivated in English; among these, impassioned autobiography, distinguished by an exquisite minuteness in the analysis of recollected sensations, is pre-eminent. He revelled in presenting impressions of intellectual self-consciousness in phrases of what he might have called sequacious splendour. De Quincey was but little enamoured of the naked truth, and a suspicion of the fabulous hangs, like a mist, over all his narrations. The most elaborate of them, the *Revolt of the Tartars*, a large canvas covered with groups of hurrying figures in sustained and painful flight, is now understood to be pure romance. The first example of his direct criticism is *Whiggism in its Relations to Literature*, which might be called the Anatomy of a Pedant.

De Quincey is sometimes noisy and flatulent, sometimes trivial, sometimes unpardonably discursive. But when he is at his best, the rapidity of his mind, its lucidity, its humour and good sense, the writer's passionate loyalty to letters, and his organ-melody of style command our deep respect. He does not, like the majority of his critical colleagues, approach literature for purposes of research, but to obtain moral effects. De Quincey, a dreamer of beautiful dreams, disdained an obstinate vassalage to mere matters of fact, but sought with intense concentration of effort after a conscientious and profound psychology of letters.

**Thomas De Quincey** (1785–1859) was the second son of Thomas Quincey of Fountain Street, Manchester, and he was born on the 15th of August 1785, in a "pretty rustic dwelling" near that city. His father was a prosperous merchant, his mother a stately and intellectual but not very sympathetic lady; there seems to have been little of either parent in that vagrant genius, their second son. In 1792 the father died, and Mrs. Quincey removed with her eight children to their country house called Greenhay, and again in 1796 to Bath, where Thomas entered the grammar school. He rapidly attained a remarkable knowledge of Latin and Greek. An accidental blow on the head from an undermaster's cane led in 1799 to a very serious illness, and Mrs. Quincey would not allow her son to return; he proceeded to a private school at Winkfield in Wilts. In 1800 he went on a visit to Eton, where, in company with Lord Westport, who was his closest friend, he was brought in touch with the court, and had two amusing interviews with George III.; he then started for a long tour of many months through England and Ireland. From the close of 1800 to 1802 he was at school at Manchester, and very unhappy; at last he ran away. He was given a guinea a week by his mother, and now began an extraordinary career of vagrancy, the events of which are recounted, in the most romantic terms, in the *Confessions*. At length, after more than a year of squalor and almost starved in the horrors of London, he was found and sent to Oxford. He entered Worcester College, a strangely experienced undergraduate, in the autumn of 1803. His health had doubtless been greatly undermined by his privations, and in 1804 he began to take laudanum as a relief from neuralgia, and those "gnawing pains in the stomach" which were to take so prominent a part in his history. His career at Oxford was very erratic; brilliant as he was, he

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

AFTER A DRAWING BY JAMES ARCHER IN THE POSSESSION OF MRS BAIRD SMITH

would not take a degree, and in 1807 he disappeared from the University altogether. About this time he gained the friendship of Lamb, Coleridge, and the Wordsworths. In 1809 he formally ceased all connection with Oxford, and bought a cottage at Townend, Grasmere, which remained his headquarters until 1830. Coleridge soon after, in 1810, left the Lakes, but with the family of Wordsworth De Quincey formed a close link of intimacy. In 1813 he was the victim of pecuniary troubles, and anxiety brought on with great violence his "most appalling irritation of the stomach." It was now, he tells us, that he "became a regular and confirmed (no longer an intermitting) opium-eater." Towards the end of 1816 he married the daughter of a neighbouring farmer, Margaret Simpson, having contrived in some degree to free himself from the bondage of the laudanum. There followed "a year of brilliant water, set, as it were, in the gloomy umbrage of opium," and then De Quincey relapsed again. He began, however, in 1821, to write in the London magazines, and in 1822, at the age of thirty-seven, he published anonymously his first book, *The Confessions of an Opium-Eater.* From 1821 to 1824 he was on the staff of the "London Magazine," and in 1825 he published the sham Waverley novel, *Walladmor*, the English adaptation of a German forgery. In 1826 he began to write for "Blackwood," and to alternate his dwelling-place between Edinburgh and Westmoreland, while in 1830 he actually transferred his wife and children from the Townend cottage to Edinburgh. For the next ten years De Quincey contributed with immense industry to "Blackwood's" and "Tait's" magazines. In 1832 he published his novel of *Klosterheim.* His personal life in these and subsequent years is very difficult to follow: it was saddened by the deaths of two of his children, and then, in 1837, of his long-suffering and devoted wife. In 1838 De Quincey took a lodging in Lothian Street, and in 1840 his young daughters, finding him helpless in domestic business, hired a cottage at Lass-

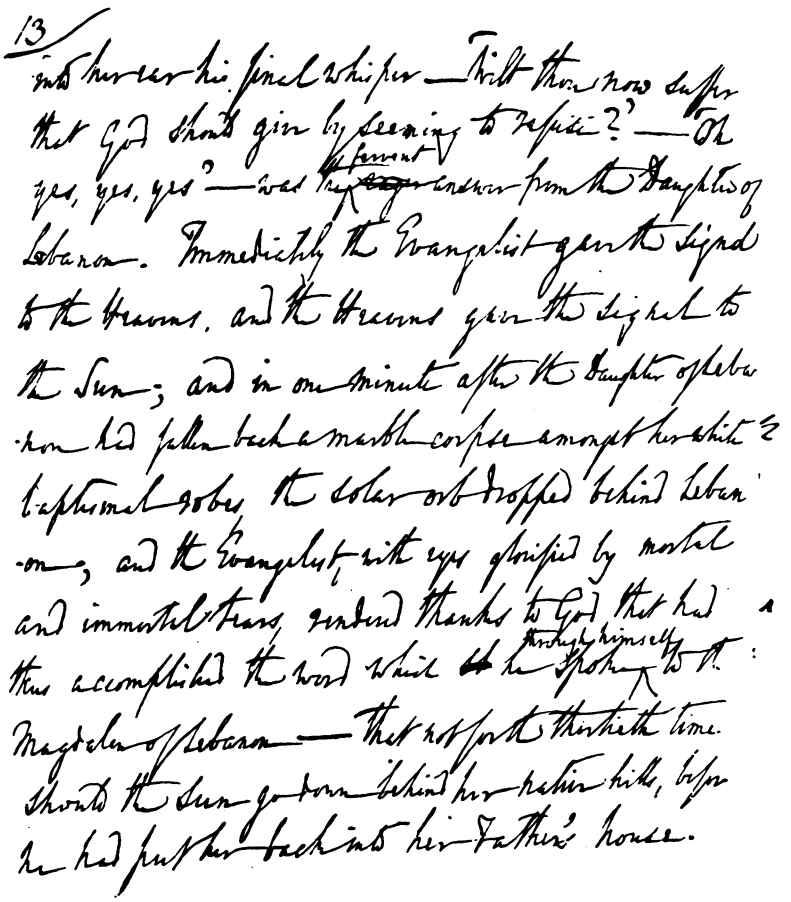
**Thomas De Quincey**

*From a Miniature in the possession of Mrs. Baird Smith*

**Mrs. Thomas De Quincey after her marriage in 1816**

*From a Miniature in the possession of Mrs. Baird Smith*

wade, seven miles out of Edinburgh, where they kept house very economically for the four younger children, and whither their eccentric father could retire when he wished. For the rest of his life this little house, called Mavis Bush, was his home whenever he emerged from the strange burrowings and campings of his extraordinary life in Edinburgh. Hitherto, and for long after this, De Quincey was in the main an inedited contributor to periodicals. In 1853 he began the



**A Fragment of the MS. of De Quincey's "Daughter of Lebanon**

issue of his Collected Works, the fourteenth volume of which appeared in 1860, just after his death. De Quincey died in his old lodging in Lothian Street, Edinburgh, of sheer senile weakness, on the 8th of December 1859, and was buried very quietly in the West Churchyard of Edinburgh. He was of an extremely small figure and boyish countenance, gentle and elaborately polite in manner, with an inexhaustible fund of exquisite conversation, which he delivered in clear and silvery tones. His eccentricity, his pugnacity, his hyperbolic courtesy, his sweetness to his children, have produced a rich sheaf of excellent literary anecdote.

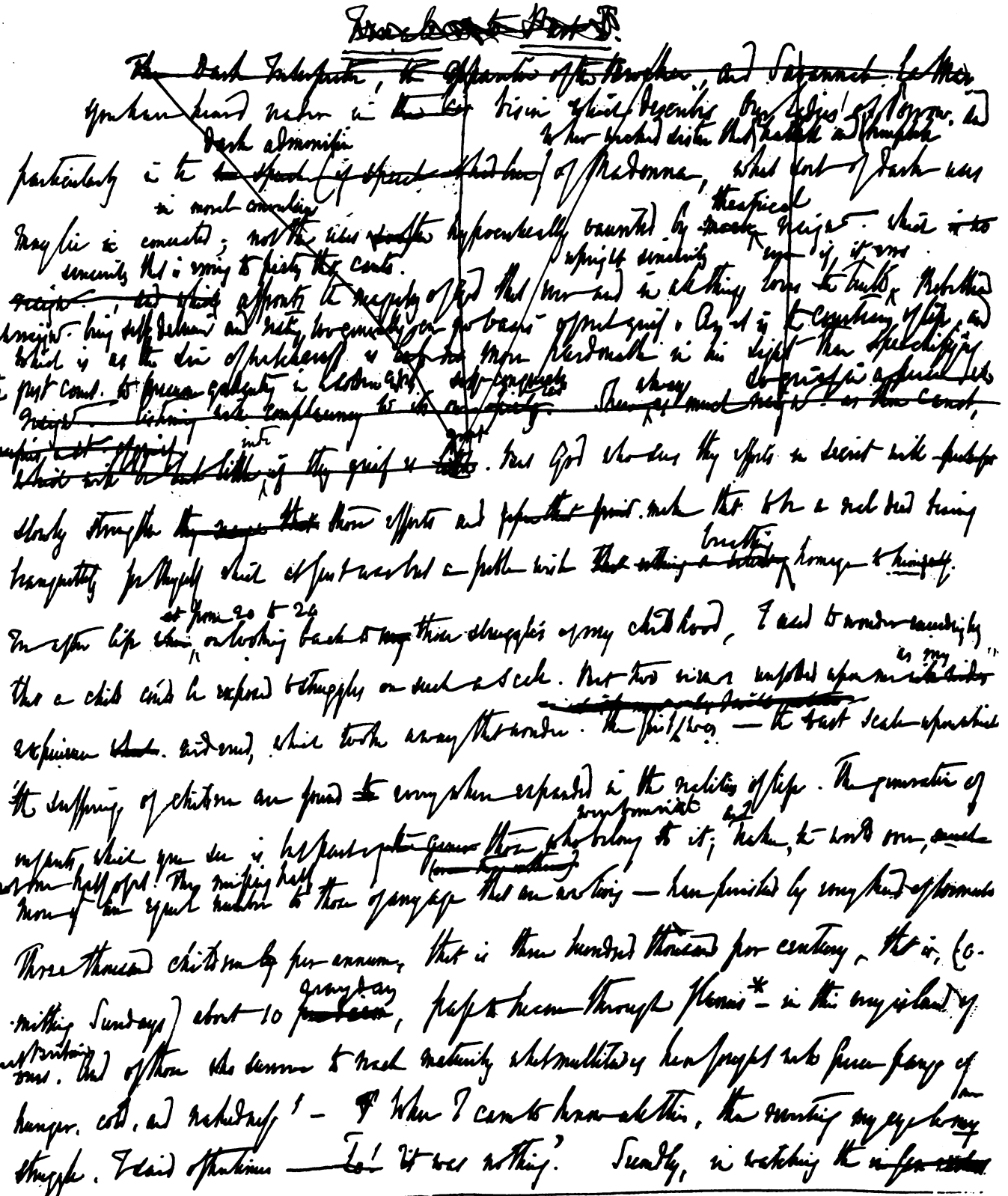
storm and it crashing which it was [illegible] in the mighty woods, reminded himself that within
hell of trouble

"Tells also of night calms that shall succeed"

Pain drives to agony, or grief drives to frenzy, and expunged to the vanishing of profound
returns. It was, what is deeper than any that Count Marsigli* measured, can with
searched and known of its sleeping depths without a passion, love or a monsoon.
A nature, which is profound in itself also introverted and abstracted in itself, contains
peril of cracks its of an inhumanity, can with cracking sometimes without affection let go

* Count Marsigli (an Austrian officer & diplomat in the Imperial Service) about 50 or 60 years ago
fathomed & attempted to fathom many parts of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic: & I remember
generally found the bottom, within, but the an English miles

infancy of your children, I make another discovery: — It is well known to mothers, to nurses, and also to philosophers — that the tears and lamentations of infants, during the year or so when they have no other language of complaint, run through a gamut that is as inexhaustible as the cremona of Paganini but not so varied. And moderately learned in that language cannot be deceived as to the note and modulation of the suffering which it indicates. A fretful or peevish cry cannot by any efforts make itself impassioned. The cry of impatience, of hunger, of irritation, of reproach, of pain, of alarm, &c. &c. as heard in the chorus of Beethoven or a chorus of Mozart's are all different. But if ever you saw an infant suffering from an hour or two from the commencement of the cholera, the healthiest does not wake under some attack of the stomach, which has the tiger grasp of the oriental cholera. Then you will hear a moan that addresses to their mothers an anguish of supplication, and such as might storm the heart of Moloch. Once hearing it, you will not forget it. Now it was a constant remark of mine, after any storm of that nature occurring perhaps once in 2 months, that always on the following day &c. — when a long long sleep had chased away the darkness and the memory of the darkness from the little creatures brain, a sensible expansion had taken place in the intellectual faculties of attention, observation, and animation. It was the care of the poet, who on listening to the raving and of the midnight



Fragment of De Quincey's MS. of "The Dark Interpreter"

misery of my own childhood. I made another discovery: — It is well known to mothers, to nurses, and also to philosophers — that the tears and lamentations of infants, during the first year or so when they have no other language of complaint, run through a gamut that is as inexhaustible as the cremona of Paganini. An ear but moderately trained in that language cannot be deceived as to the note and modulation of the suffering which it indicates. A fretful or peevish cry can be by any efforts made itself impassioned. The cry of impatience, of hunger, of irritation, of reproach, of pain, of alarm, of anger, as they change from the one to the other, are all different. But if ever you saw an infant suffering for an hour or two under the cruellest pangs, the healthiest does with under some attack of the stomach, which has the tiger grasp of the oriental cholera, then you will hear a moan that addresses itself to their mothers in an agony of supplication, and such as might storm the heart of Moloch. Once hearing, you will not forget it. Now it was a constant remark of mine, after any storm of that nature (occurring perhaps once in 2 months) that always on the following day — when a long long sleep had carried away the darkness, and the memory of the darkness from the little creatures brain, a sensible reaction had taken place in the intellectual faculties of attention, observation, and animation. It was the care of my poor, who on listening to the raving and of the midnight storm and the crashing which it was making in the mighty woods, reminded themselves that all was well of trouble.

"Tells also of bright calms that shall succeed"

Pain from agony, or grief from despair, and frenzy, and [illegible] the symbols of profound returns. A sea, which is deeper than any that Count Marsigli* measured, cannot be searched and from its sleeping depths without a passion counter or a monsoon a nature, which is profound is rarely to be also introverted and abstracted in sleep, so that the pencil of reality its self in unfathomable recesses cannot be awakened sometimes without affections that go

* Count Marsigli (an Austrian officer of high in the Imperial service) about 50 or 60 years ago fathomed & attempted to fathom many parts of the Mediterranean and the Adriatic: & I remember I generally found the bottom within a few fathoms.

### From "The Confessions of an English Opium-Eater."

The dream commenced with a music which now I often heard in dreams—a music of preparation and of awakening suspense; a music like the opening of the Coronation Anthem, and which, like *that*, gave the feeling of a vast march—of infinite cavalcades filing off—and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day—a day of crisis and of final hope for human nature, then suffering some mysterious eclipse, and labouring in some dread extremity. Somewhere, I knew not where—somehow, I knew not how—by some beings, I knew not whom—a battle, a strife, an agony, was conducting—was evolving like a great drama, or piece of music; with which my sympathy was the more insupportable from my confusion as to its place, its cause, its nature, and its possible issue. I, as is usual in dreams (where, of necessity, we make ourselves central to every movement), had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I had the power, if I could raise myself, to will it; and yet again had not the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpiable guilt. "Deeper than ever plummet sounded" I lay inactive. Then, like a chorus, the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake; some mightier cause than ever yet the sword had pleaded, or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms: hurryings to and fro: trepidations of innumerable fugitives, I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad: darkness and lights: tempest and human faces; and at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me, and but a moment allowed,—and clasped hands, and heart-breaking partings, and then—everlasting farewells! and with a sigh, such as the caves of hell sighed when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of death, the sound was reverberated—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated—everlasting farewells!

And I awoke in struggles, and cried aloud—"I will sleep no more!"

### From "Levana and Our Ladies of Sorrow."

The second sister is called *Mater Suspiriorum*—Our Lady of Sighs. She never scales the clouds, nor walks abroad upon the winds. She wears no diadem. And her eyes, if they were ever seen, would be neither sweet nor subtle; no man could read their story; they would be found filled with perishing dreams, and with wrecks of forgotten delirium. But she raises not her eyes; her head, on which sits a dilapidated turban, droops for ever, for ever fastens on the dust. She weeps not. She groans not. But she sighs inaudibly at intervals. Her sister, Madonna, is oftentimes stormy and frantic, raging in the highest against heaven, and demanding back her darlings. But Our Lady of Sighs never clamours, never defies, dreams not of rebellious aspirations. She is humble to abjectness. Hers is the meekness that belongs to the hopeless. Murmur she may, but it is in her sleep. Whisper she may, but it is to herself in the twilight. Mutter she does at times, but it is in solitary places that are desolate as she is desolate, in ruined cities, and when the sun has gone down to his rest. This sister is the visitor of the Pariah, of the Jew, of the bondsman to the oar in the Mediterranean galleys; and of the English criminal in Norfolk Island, blotted out from the books of remembrance in sweet far-off England; of the baffled penitent reverting his eyes for ever upon a solitary grave, which to him seems the altar overthrown of some past and bloody sacrifice, on which altar no oblations can now be availing, whether towards pardon that he might implore, or towards reparation that he might attempt. Every slave that at noonday looks up to the tropical sun with timid reproach, as he points with one hand to the earth, our general mother, but for *him* a stepmother,—as he points with the other hand to the Bible, our general teacher, but against *him* sealed and sequestered;—every woman sitting in darkness, without love to shelter her head, or hope to illumine her solitude, because the heaven-born instincts kindling

in her nature germs of holy affections which God implanted in her womanly bosom, having been stifled by social necessities, now burn sullenly to waste, like sepulchral lamps amongst the ancients; every nun defrauded of her unreturning May-time by wicked kinsmen, whom God will judge; every captive in every dungeon; all that are betrayed and all that are rejected outcasts by traditionary law, and children of *hereditary* disgrace,—all these walk with Our Lady of Sighs. She also carries a key; but she needs it little. For her kingdom is chiefly amongst the tents of Shem, and the houseless vagrant of every clime. Yet in the very highest walks of man she finds chapels of her own; and even in glorious England there are some that, to the world, carry their heads as proudly as the reindeer, who yet secretly have received her mark upon their foreheads.

*Hazlitt*

**William Hazlitt** (1778–1830) was the youngest son of the Rev. Willliam Hazlitt, a Presbyterian minister from Tipperary, and of his wife, Grace Loftus, the handsome daughter of a farmer. He was born at Maidstone on the 10th of April 1778. His father became a Unitarian, and travelled with his family in Ireland and America before settling in 1786 at Wem, in Shropshire, where young William was brought up in an atmosphere of radicalism and strenuous nonconformity. He was educated for the ministry at Hackney College, and was still preparing in his father's house, when a crisis in his life was brought about by the accident of a visit paid to Wem by S. T. Coleridge. The poet-orator absolutely bewitched young Hazlitt, who a few months later visited Coleridge and Wordsworth in the Quantocks, and was encouraged to begin to write. He seems to have lived without definite employment, however, until 1802, when he was induced to give himself to the study of painting as a profession. For this purpose he went to Paris and worked there for four months. The result was a number of portraits, some of which, curious and interesting specimens, survive. He returned, however, to literature, and in 1805 he published his first book, *An Essay on the Principles of Human Actions*, and he followed this up by certain anonymous pamphlets. In 1808 he married Sarah Stoddart, a friend of Charles and Mary Lamb, and on her little property at Winterslow, in Wilts, Hazlitt lived several unproductive years. It became necessary, however, to earn money, and in 1812 Hazlitt came to London, and began to take up lecturing and writing for the papers. From 1814 to 1830 he was almost a regular contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*. Mrs. Hazlitt had an "excellent disposition," but she was excessively trying in domestic intercourse, and their relations soon became strained. Now, in his fortieth year, Hazlitt published his first important book, *Characters of Shakespeare's Plays* (1817), and in 1818 he collected his theatrical articles in a volume called *A View of the English Stage*.

**William Hazlitt**

*From a Miniature by his brother*

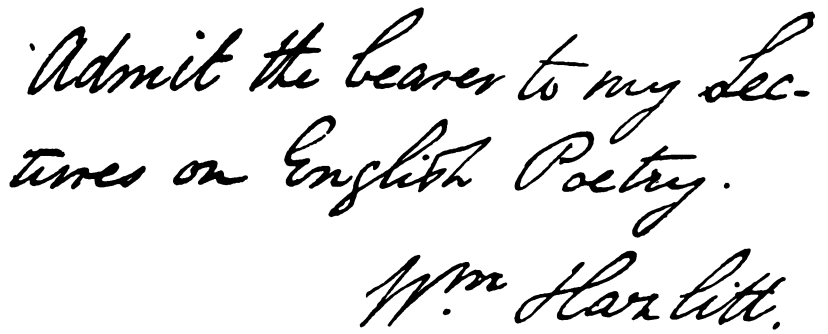
He was presently recognised as one of the best of living critics, and was invited to deliver courses of lectures (1818–1821) on the poets. These were largely attended, and had a remarkable influence on cultivated opinion. Hazlitt's manner as a lecturer, we are told, was not precisely eloquent, but earnest, sturdy, and impressive. All this time Hazlitt had remained an enemy to privilege and tyranny, and, to prove himself still in possession of a manly spirit of liberty, he published in 1819 his *Political Essays*. This awakened the rage of the Tory press, and Hazlitt was persecuted by "Blackwood" and the "Quarterly." Many of his essays, and particularly the charming collections called *Table Talk* (1821–1822), were written "beside the blazing hearth" of a solitary coaching inn at The Hut, Winterslow, whither he loved more and more often to retire from the noise of London and the bickerings of his family circle. It was now that this discomfort in marriage was intensified by the extraordinary and (it must be said) rather vulgar infatuation of Hazlitt for the daughter of a tailor called Walker, who kept lodgings in Southampton Buildings. He recorded this amazing episode in what De Quincey called "an explosion of frenzy," the *Liber Amoris* of 1823, a brilliantly-written analysis of an insane passion. He obtained a divorce "by Scotch law" from his wife, from whom, indeed, he had been separated since 1819, but he did not induce Sarah Walker to marry him. In 1824, however, he met in a coach and promptly married a widow, Mrs. Bridgewater, who had some money and with whom Hazlitt started on a tour of the galleries of Europe. At the close of it the second Mrs. Hazlitt declined to have anything more to say to him. He published many books about this time, and in particular *The Spirit of the Age* in 1825, which has been called "the harvest-home of Hazlitt's mind." Most of his productions of these years were issued without his name on the title-page. His largest work, *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte* (1828–1830), was a disappointment to his admirers. His misfortunes gathered about him, and on the 18th of September 1830, an hour or two after bidding farewell to Charles Lamb, he died in lodgings in Soho. His posthumous essays were collected in 1850, under the title of *Winterslow*. Hazlitt had a handsome face, with curled dark hair, and bright eyes; but his gait was slouching and awkward, and his dress neglected. His own account of himself is, "I have loitered my life away, reading books, looking at pictures, going to plays, hearing, thinking, writing on what pleased me best. I have wanted only one thing to make me happy; but wanting that, have wanted everything." The student of Hazlitt's life will not be at a loss to know what that was; but perhaps he exaggerated his sense of its importance, since his last words were, "I have had a happy life."

**House in York Street, Westminster, said to have been Milton's, occupied by Hazlitt**

FROM "LECTURES ON THE ENGLISH POETS."

*Poetry.*

Poetry is in all its shapes the language of the imagination and the passions, of fancy and will. Nothing, therefore, can be more absurd than the outcry which has been sometimes raised by frigid and pedantic critics for reducing the language of poetry to the standard of common sense and reason; for the end and use of poetry, "both at the first and now, was and is to hold the mirror up to nature," seen through the medium of passion and imagination, not divested of that medium by means of literal truth or abstract reason. The painter of history might as well be required to represent the face of a person who has just trod upon a serpent with the still-life expression of a common portrait, as the poet to describe the most striking and vivid impressions which things can be supposed to make upon the mind in the language of common conversation. Let who will strip nature of the colours and the shapes of fancy, the poet is not bound to do so; the impressions of common sense and strong



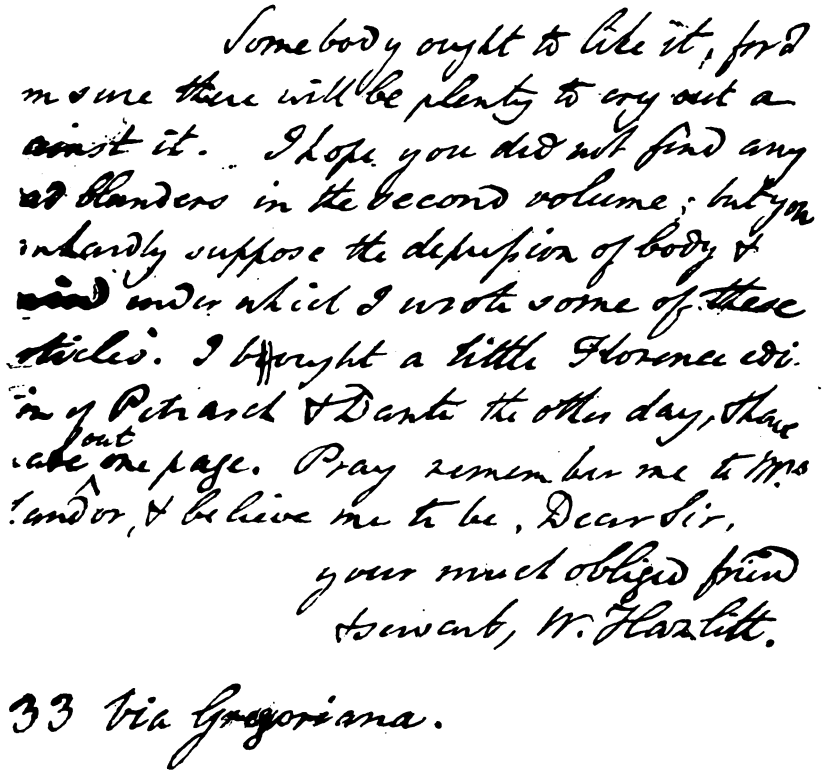

imagination, that is, of passion and indifference, cannot be the same, and they must have a separate language to do justice to either. Objects must strike differently upon the mind, independently of what they are in themselves, as long as we have a different interest in them, as we see them in a different point of view, nearer or at a greater distance (morally or physically speaking), from novelty, from old acquaintance, from our ignorance of them, from our fear of their consequences, from contrast, from unexpected likeness. We can no more take away the faculty of the imagination than we can see all objects without light or shade. Some things must dazzle us by their preternatural light; others must hold us in suspense, and tempt our curiosity to explore their obscurity. Those who would dispel these various illusions, to give us their drab-coloured creation in their stead, are not very wise. Let the naturalist, if he will, catch the glow-worm, carry it home with him in a box, and find it next morning nothing but a little grey worm: let the poet or the lover of poetry visit it at evening, when, beneath the scented hawthorn and the crescent moon, it has built itself a palace of emerald light.

FROM "TABLE TALK."

*Style.*

Mr. Lamb is the only imitator of old English style I can read with pleasure, and he is so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of his authors, that the idea of imitation is almost done away. There is an inward unction, a marrowy vein both in the thought and feeling, an intuition, deep and lively, of his subject, that carries off any quaintness or awkwardness arising from an antiquated style and dress. The matter is completely

his own, though the manner is assumed. Perhaps his ideas are altogether so marked and individual as to require their point and pungency to be neutralised by the affectation of a singular but traditional form of conveyance. Tricked out in the prevailing costume, they would probably seem more startling and out of the way. The old English authors, Burton, Fuller, Coryat, Sir Thomas Browne are a kind of mediators between us and the more eccentric and whimsical modern, reconciling us to his peculiarities. I do not, however, know how far this is the case or not till he condescends to write like one of us. I must confess that what I like best of his papers under the signature of Elia (still, I do not presume, amidst such excellence, to decide what is most excellent) is the account



Somebody ought to like it, for I
more there will be plenty to cry out a
gainst it. I hope you did not find any
blunders in the second volume; but you
indeedly suppose the depression of body &
mind under which I wrote some of these
Articles. I bought a little Florence edi-
tion of Petrarch & Dante the other day, that
cost one page. Pray remember me to Mrs
Landor, & believe me to be, Dear Sir,
your much obliged friend
& servant, W. Hazlitt.

33 Via Gregoriana.

**Fragment of a Letter written in Rome from Hazlitt to W. Savage Landor**

of "Mrs. Battle's Opinions on Whist," which is also the most free from obsolete allusions and turns of expression:

"A well of native English undefiled."

To those acquainted with his admired prototypes, the essays of the ingenious and highly-gifted author have the same sort of charm and relish that Erasmus's Colloquies or a fine piece of modern Latin have to the classical scholar. Certainly, I do not know any borrowed pencil that has more power or felicity of execution than the one of which I have here been speaking.

FROM "WINTERSLOW."

*The Appearance of Wordsworth.*

The next day Wordsworth arrived from Bristol at Coleridge's cottage. I think I see him now. He answered in some degree to his friend's description of him, but was

more quaint and Don Quixote-like. He was quaintly dressed (according to the costume of that unconstrained period) in a brown fustian jacket and striped pantaloons. There was something of a roll, a lounge, in his gait, not unlike his own "Peter Bell." There was a severe, worn pressure of thought about his temples, a fire in his eye (as if he saw something in objects more than the outward appearance), an intense, high, narrow forehead, a Roman nose, cheeks furrowed by strong purpose and feeling, and a convulsive inclination to laughter about the mouth, a good deal at variance with the solemn, stately expression of the rest of his face. Chantrey's bust wants the marking traits; but he was teased into making it regular and heavy: Haydon's head of him, introduced into the "Entrance of Christ into Jerusalem," is the most like his drooping weight of thought and expression. He sat down and talked very naturally and freely, with a mixture of clear, gushing accents in his voice, a deep guttural intonation, and a strong tincture of the northern *burr* like the crust on wine. He instantly began to make havoc of the half of a Cheshire cheese on the table, and said, triumphantly, that "his marriage with experience had not been so productive as Mr. Southey's in teaching him a knowledge of the good things of this life." He had been to see the "Castle Spectre," by Monk Lewis, while at Bristol, and described it very well. He said, "it fitted the taste of the audience like a glove." This *ad captandum* merit was, however, by no means a recommendation of it, according to the severe principles of the new school, which reject rather than court popular effect. Wordsworth, looking out of the low, latticed window, said, "How beautifully the sun sets on that yellow bank!" I thought within myself, "With what eyes these poets see nature!" and ever after, when I saw the sunset stream upon objects facing it, conceived I had made a discovery, or thanked Mr. Wordsworth for having made one for me! We went over to All-Foxden again the day following, and Wordsworth read us the story of "Peter Bell" in the open air, and the comment upon it by his face and voice was very different from that of some later critics.

*Landor* With this group of literary critics may be mentioned one who was not without relation with them, and who was yet widely distinct. The men of whom we have been speaking sought their inspiration mainly in the newly recovered treasures of early national poetry and prose. These were also formative elements in the mind of WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR; but he imitated more closely than they the great classics of antiquity, and, in particular, Pindar, Æschylus, and Cicero. As early as 1795 he had occasionally published poetry; his concentrated and majestic *Gebir* is certainly one of the pioneers of English romanticism. But Landor, with his tumultuous passions and angry self-sufficiency, led a youth tormented by too much emotional and social tempest and too little public encouragement to become prominent in prose or verse. It was in the comparative serenity of middle age, and during his happy stay in or near Florence from 1821 to 1828, that he wrote the *Imaginary Conversations*, and became one of the great English men of letters. No other work of Landor's has achieved popularity, although much of his occasional prose and verse has called forth the impassioned praise of individuals.

The *Conversations* display, in stiff and Attic form, dramatic aptitudes, for confirmation of which we search in vain the pages of his academic plays. These historic dialogues, strange as it seems, were refused by publisher after publisher; but at length two volumes of them were issued, and the world was gained. This great series of stately colloquies holds a unique position in English literature. The style of Landor is too austere,

too little provided with ornament, too strenuously allusive to please the running reader. But in a mingling of dignity and delicacy, purity and vehemence, into what is an amalgam of all the rarer qualities of thought and expression, Landor ranks only just below the greatest masters of language. His genius is impeded by a certain haughty stiffness; he approaches majestically, and sometimes nimbly, but always protected from the reader by a suit of mail, always rendered inaccessible by an unconquerable shyness.

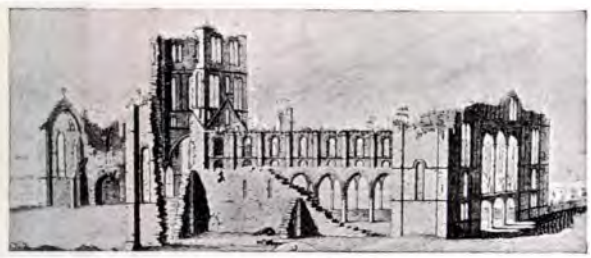
**Walter Savage Landor** (1775–1864) was the eldest son of Dr. Landor, a physician of Warwick, where he was born on the 30th of January 1775. His mother, Elizabeth Savage, was an heiress, and her valuable estates of Ipsley Court and Tachbrook were strictly entailed upon the future poet, who was brought up in luxurious refinement. He was a sensitive child and an intelligent boy; at Rugby, where he went in 1785, he held his own in games as well as in studies. He was early a voracious reader, and began to turn verses for his pleasure both in English and Latin. Even at Rugby, however, his strange violence of temper interfered with his happiness, and at last he was withdrawn from the school that he might not be expelled for rebellion. He studied for two years with the vicar of "romantic" Ashbourne, becoming an accomplished Hellenist, and in 1793 he took up his residence at Trinity College, Oxford. Here Landor posed as a republican, and went to hall with his hair unpowdered; he was known as "the mad Jacobin," and for a freak he was at length sent down. In consequence of this rustication, Landor quarrelled with his father, and quitted him, as he said, "for ever." He came up to London in 1794, and lodged at Beaumont Street, Portland Place; here, in the following year, he published his first *Poems*, in English and Latin, and the *Moral Epistle to Lord Stanhope*. The quarrel with his family was presently made up, but Landor did not return to Warwick or to Oxford; he withdrew to the south coast of

**Walter Savage Landor**

*After the Portrait by W. Fisher*

Wales, where he lived absolutely solitary, with "one servant and one chest of books," feeding his spirit with poetry and nature. At Tenby he wrote *Gebir*, and met the Rose Aylmer of his verse; the former appeared in 1798. It was unperceived, except by Southey. Landor was still a republican, and he continued to be one even when, in 1802, he visited Paris and saw the ruin of the cause of liberty. During all these years he was devoted to the lady whom he addressed as Ianthe; but at length he discovered that "hers never was the heart for him." In 1805 old Dr. Landor died, and the poet came into possession of his estates. He now adopted a style of prodigal expenditure, and, residing at Bath, took up the rôle of the extravagant and eccentric young gentleman of fashion. He did not, however, for a moment neglect scholarship and poetry; in 1806 he published his Latin poems, *Simonidea*. His mode of life soon strained his finances, and in 1808 he had to endure considerable and unwise sacrifices in order to purchase the magnificent estate of Llanthony Abbey in Glamorganshire, on which he had set his heart. It was about this time that he first met Southey, with whom Landor formed a lifelong friendship. He took part, in 1808, in the revolt of the Spaniards from the yoke of the French; he spent some months in Spain and a great deal of money, but failed to be concerned in any actual fighting. By the summer of 1809 he was settled in his priory of Llanthony, where he lived part of the year, alternating it with Bath. In 1811, with characteristic abruptness, he married, on almost no acquaintance, Julia Thuillier, the penniless daughter of a ruined Swiss banker. The marriage turned out very unhappily. Landor published his *Count Julian* in 1812, and his *Idyllia Heroica* in 1814. By the latter year, however, he had brought his private affairs into great confusion; he had contrived to quarrel with everybody, from the bishop of the diocese down to the workmen on his estate; it is fair to add that he appears to have been abominably treated by his rascally tenants and servants. By the summer he found himself practically ruined, and abandoning Llanthony to the hands of trustees, he withdrew to the Continent, leaving his wife in Jersey and pushing on alone to Como, where she afterwards joined him. In 1818 Landor was ordered

**Landor's Birthplace at Warwick**



**The Ruins of Llanthony Abbey**

to leave Italy for having threatened to chastise the poet Monti, but he moved only to Pisa, which continued to be his home until 1821. For the eight years from 1821 to 1829 Florence was the home of Landor, originally in the city itself, then in the Villa Castiglione. In 1824 appeared the first and in 1829 the fifth volumes of the *Imaginary Conversations*. He now, in advancing years, became for the first time generally distinguished, although even yet he was little known to the larger public. In 1829, through the kindness of a Welsh friend, Mr. Ablett, Landor was able to buy an exquisite estate at Fiesole, the Villa Gherardesca, which now became his home, and here he was happy and at peace for several years. In 1834 he published the *Citation and Examination of Shakespeare*, in 1836 *Pericles and Aspasia*, and in 1837 *The Pentameron and Pentalogia*. But before the latter date he had broken up his home in Fiesole, had left his wife in anger, and had returned to England. He settled finally and alone in Bath, where he remained for more than twenty years. The most important of his later publications were *The Last Fruit off an Old Tree* (1853); *Antony and Octavius* (1856); and *Dry Sticks* (1858). In the latter year, in consequence of an unlucky dispute, and rather than face an action for libel, the fierce old man fled to Florence. Here he found his children, whom he had enriched at his own expense, and it is to their shame that they appear to have received him in his ruin with the coldest ingratitude. But for the generous kindness of Robert Browning, Landor must have starved. His last book, *Heroic Idyls*, appeared in 1863. His arrogance was with him to the end. He lived on to reach his 90th year, and died at Florence on the 17th of September 1864. Mr. Swinburne celebrated his obsequies magnificently in Greek and English. Crabb Robinson has described Landor in his prime as "a man of florid complexion, with large full eyes, altogether a leonine man, with a fierceness of tone well suited to his name."

**Walter Savage Landor**

*After the Portrait by Boxall*

FROM "IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS."

*Southey.* Occasionally I have been dissatisfied with Milton, because in my opinion that is ill said in prose which can be said more plainly. Not so in poetry; if it were, much of Pindar and Æschylus, and no little of Dante, would be censurable.

*Landor.* Acknowledge that he whose poetry I am holding in my hand is free from every false ornament in his prose, unless a few bosses of latinity may be called so, and I am ready to admit the full claims of your favourite, South. Acknowledge that, heading all the forces of our language, he was the great antagonist of every great monster which infested our country; and he disdained to trim his lion-skin with lace. No other English writer has equalled Raleigh, Hooker, and Milton, in the loftier parts of their works.

*Southey.* But Hooker and Milton, you allow, are sometimes pedantic. In Hooker there is nothing so elevated as there is in Raleigh.

*Landor.* Neither he, however, nor any modern, nor any ancient, has attained to that summit on which the sacred ark of Milton strikes and rests. Reflections, such as we indulged in on the borders of the Larius, come over me here again. Perhaps from the very sod where you are sitting, the poet in his youth sat looking at the Sabrina he was soon to celebrate. There is pleasure in the sight of a glebe which never has been broken; but it delights me particularly in those places where great men have been before. I do not mean warriors—for extremely few among the most remarkable of them will a considerate man call great—but poets and philosophers and philanthropists, the ornaments of society, the charmers of solitude, the warders of civilisation, the watchmen at the gate which Tyranny would batter down, and the healers of those wounds, which she left festering in the field. And now, to reduce this demon into its proper toad-shape again, and to lose sight of it, open your *Paradise Lost.*

**Landor's Villa at Fiesole**

*Southey.* Shall we begin with it immediately? or shall we listen a little while to the woodlark? He seems to know what we are about; for there is a sweetness, a variety, and a gravity in his cadences, befitting the place and theme. Another time we might afford the whole hour to him.

*Landor.* The woodlark, the nightingale, and the ringdove have made me idle for many, even when I had gone into the fields on purpose to gather fresh materials for composition. A little thing turns me from one idleness to another. More than once, when I have taken out my pencil to fix an idea on paper, the smell of the cedar, held by me unconsciously across the nostrils, has so absorbed the senses that what I was about to write down has vanished altogether and irrecoverably.

FROM "PERICLES AND ASPASIA."

We are losing, day by day, one friend or other. Artemidora of Ephesus was betrothed to Elpenor, and their nuptials, it was believed, were at hand. How gladly would Artemidora have survived Elpenor. I pitied her almost as much as if she had. I must ever love true lovers on the eve of separation. These indeed were little known to me until a short time before. We became friends when our fates had made us relatives. On these

Eldon and Ellenborough

(Eldon): Ellenborough! why do you look so grave—am I to be silent? (Ellenborough) To confess the truth, I played last evening, and lost. (Eldon) You played! Do you call it playing to plunder your guests and over-reach your friends? Do you call it playing, to be unhappy if you cannot be a robber? happy, if you can be one? The fingers of a gamester reach further than a robber's or a murderer's, and do more mischief. Against the robber or murderer the country is up in arms at once: to the gamester every bosom is open, that it may contaminate or stab it. (Ellenborough) Certainly I have neither stabbed nor contaminated; I have neither plundered nor over-reached. (Eldon) If you did not fancy you had some advantages over your adversary, you would never have tried your fortune with him. I am not sorry you lost: it will teach you better. (Ellenborough) My dear father! if you could but advance me the money! (Eldon) Your next quarter, the beginning of April, is nigh at hand. However, a part, a moiety, forty days after date: who knows!.. (Ellenborough) My Lord, I am sorry to say, so heavy. (Eldon) Then wait. (Ellenborough) Losers would willingly wait, if winners have always a spur against the flank. (Eldon) Tell me the amount of the debt. (Ellenborough) Two thousand pounds. (Eldon) Two..£ what! thousand.. pounds! Pounds did you say? pounds sterling? incredible! (Ellenborough) Too true!

γ Page of the MS. of Landor's "Imaginary Conversations"

occasions there are always many verses, but not always so true in feeling and in fact as those which I shall now transcribe for you.

"Artemidora! Gods invisible,
While thou art lying faint along the couch,
Have tied the sandal to thy veinèd feet,
And stand beside thee, ready to convey
Thy weary steps where other rivers flow.
Refreshing shades will waft thy weariness
Away, and voices like thine own come nigh,
Soliciting, nor vainly, thy embrace."
Artemidora sigh'd, and would have press'd
The hand now pressing hers, but was too weak.
Fate's shears were over her dark hair unseen
While thus Elpenor spake: he look'd into
Eyes that had given light and life erewhile
To those above them, those now dim with tears
And watchfulness. Again he spoke of joy
Eternal. At that word, that sad word, *joy*,
Faithful and fond her bosom heav'd once more,
Her head fell back: one sob, one loud deep sob
Swell'd through the darken'd chamber; 'twas not hers:
With her that old boat incorruptible,
Unwearied, undiverted in its course,
Had plash'd the water up the farther strand.

*The Historians*

The second romantic generation was marked by the rise of a school of historians inferior only to the great classic group of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon. In the full tide of monarchical reaction, William Mitford completed his *History of Greece*, a book eloquent and meritorious in its way, but to be superseded by the labours of Grote. Sharon Turner, a careful imitator of Gibbon, illustrated the Anglo-Saxon period of our chronicles, and the Scottish metaphysician, Sir James Mackintosh, towards the close of his life, occupied himself with the constitutional history of England. Of more importance was the broad and competent English history of Lingard, a Catholic priest at Ushaw, whose work, though bitterly attacked from the partisan point of view, has been proved to be in the main loyal and accurate. These excellent volumes deserve the praise which should be given in rhetorical times to histories of modest learning and research. It was the ambition of Southey, who was an admirable biographer, to excel in history also. In Brazil and in the Peninsular war he found excellent subjects, but his treatment was not brilliant enough to save his books from becoming obsolete. The second of these was, indeed, almost immediately superseded by Sir W. Napier's *History of the War in the Peninsula*, a masterpiece of military erudition.

**William Mitford** (1744–1827), who belonged to an old Northumbrian family, was born in London on the 10th of February 1744. He was educated at Cheam School, and at Queen's College, Oxford. In 1761 he succeeded to a valuable estate in Hampshire, and on coming of age determined to devote himself entirely to history. He became, eventually, Verdurer of the New Forest, and was a

member of two parliaments, but the real business of his life was the preparation of his *History of Greece*, which appeared in successive volumes from 1784 to 1810. He was a great enemy of democratic forms of government, as his principal pleasure, as Byron says, "consisted in praising tyrants." Mitford died on the 8th of February 1827. **Sharon Turner** (1768–1847) was a London attorney, who published a *History of England to the Norman Conquest* in 1799, and later on a *History of England in the Middle Ages*. A more interesting figure was that of **John Lingard** (1771–1851), who was the son of a carpenter at Winchester. He was educated at the English College at Douai, and stayed there nine years, being trained for the Catholic priesthood. When the seminary of Crook Hall was formed in 1794, Lingard became one of its original members, and continued there until the community, in 1808, was merged in Ushaw. In 1811, having declined the presidency of Maynooth College, he withdrew to Hornby, near Lancaster, where he spent forty years, immersed in historical research. In 1825 he was secretly made Cardinal, a title which at that time could not be assumed in England. Lingard's great *History of England* appeared in eight volumes between 1819 and 1830. He died at Hornby, 17th July 1851. **Sir William Francis Patrick Napier** (1785–1860) was born at Celbridge, County Kildare, on the 17th of December 1785. He entered the army in 1800, and after seeing a great deal of active service, retired in 1819 and settled in London. His *History of the Peninsular War* was published in six volumes between 1828 and 1840. From 1842 to 1847 Napier lived in Guernsey, as Lieutenant-Governor. He died at Clapham Park on the 10th of February 1860.

**William Mitford**

*From a Drawing by H. Edridge*

**John Lingard**

*After a Portrait by James Ramsay*

***Hallam*** These names, however, merely lead us up to that of HENRY HALLAM, whose *View of the Middle Ages*, in 1818, announced to the world a brilliantly gifted writer on political history. His *Constitutional History of England* came nine years later. In his old age Hallam made a track through the previously pathless waste of general European literature. His gravity is supported by a vast basis of solid knowledge, his judgment is sane and balanced, and to his immediate contemporaries his style appeared remarkable

for "succinctness and perspicuous beauty." But the modern writer is not so well pleased with Hallam, who begins to be the Georgian type of the falsely impressive. His felicities are those which Macaulay emphasised and carried to a further precision; his faults are his own, and they are a want of intuitive sympathy with the subject under discussion, and a monotonous and barren pomp of delivery which never becomes easy or flexible. The far-famed "judgment," too, of Hallam is not as wide as we could wish. He is safe only in the discussion of recognised types, and the reader searches his critical pages in vain for signs of the recognition of an eccentric or abnormal talent. The most laudable tendency of the historians of this age, seen in Hallam, indeed, but even more plainly in secondary writers, such as P. F. Tytler, William Coxe, the memoir-writer, and James Mill, was towards the adoption of a scientific accuracy. It was the aim of these men to reject mere legend and rhetorical superstition, and to build, as one of them said, "the history of a country upon unquestionable muniments." In this way they pointed directly to that scientific school of history which has been one of the glories of the later years of the nineteenth century.

**Henry Hallam**

*From an Engraving by Cousins of the Portrait by Thomas Phillips*

**Henry Hallam** (1777–1859) was the son of a Dean of Bristol, and was born at Windsor on the 9th of July 1777. He was entered at Eton in 1790, and remained there until he proceeded to Christ Church, Oxford, in April 1795. He took his degree there in 1799, and became a student at the Inner Temple; he was called to the bar in July 1802. Beyond these bare facts, however, little is recorded of Hallam's early life, except that he was identified with the Whigs of the *Edinburgh Review*. His political friends secured him from all anxiety by providing him with a commissionship of records, afterwards of stamps, a post which he held from 1806 to 1826. He married in 1807, and began to devote himself entirely to historical research. His first great production, *A View of the State of Europe during the Middle Ages*, was published in 1818, and was the earliest comprehensive survey of

modern history which had been attempted. In 1827 Hallam produced his *Constitutional History of England*, bringing the subject down to the reign of George III. In spite of the impartiality of the author, this work was attacked in the Tory press as "the production of a decided partisan." Hallam turned from the thorny paths of political history to *belles-lettres*, and from 1837 to 1839 produced the four ample volumes of his *Introduction to the Literature of Europe*. Before this he had suffered the loss of his highly-gifted son, Arthur Henry Hallam (1811–1833), whose grace and promise are passionately celebrated by Tennyson in *In Memoriam;* the historian published his son's remains, with a short life, in 1834. In 1852 he made a selection of his own literary essays. Hallam bore repeated domestic sorrow with dignified resignation, and died, full of years and honours, at his house at Penshurst, on the 21st of January 1859.

FROM "A VIEW OF THE STATE OF EUROPE."

If we look at the feudal polity as a scheme of civil freedom, it bears a noble countenance. To the feudal law it is owing that the very names of right and privilege were not swept away, as in Asia, by the desolating hand of power. The tyranny which, on every favourable moment, was breaking through all barriers would have rioted without control if, when the people were poor and disunited, the nobility had not been brave and free. So far as the sphere of feudality extended, it diffused the spirit of liberty and the notions of private right. Every one will acknowledge this who considers the limitations of the services of vassalage, so cautiously marked in those law-books which are the record of customs; the reciprocity of obligation between the lord and his tenant; the consent required in every measure of a legislative or general nature; the security, above all, which every vassal found in the administration of justice by his peers, and even—we may in this sense say—in the trial by combat. The bulk of the people, it is true, were degraded by servitude; but this had no connection with the feudal tenures.

The peace and good order of society were not promoted by this system. Though private wars did not originate in the feudal customs, it is impossible to doubt that they were perpetuated by so convenient an institution, which indeed owed its universal establishment to no other cause. And as predominant habits of warfare are totally irreconcilable with those of industry, not merely by the immediate works of destruction which render its efforts unavailing, but through that contempt of peaceful occupations which they produce, the feudal system must have been intrinsically adverse to the accumulation of wealth, and the improvement of those arts which mitigate the evils or abridge the labours of mankind.

*The Novelists* The splendid achievements of Miss Austen in the novel and Sir Walter Scott in romance tended somewhat to the discouragement of their immediate successors. The Waverley Novels continued to be poured forth, in rapid and splendid succession, throughout the years which we are now considering, and they obscured the fame of all possible rivals. Yet there were, during this period, secondary writers, independent of the influence of Scott, whose novels possessed sterling merit. From that interesting Scottish author, MARY BRUNTON, whose *Self-Control* and *Discipline* are excellent precursors of a long series of "kail-yard" fiction, there naturally descended the delightful Miss SUSAN FERRIER, whose *Marriage* charmed not only the author of *Waverley*, but a host of lesser readers, by its lively humour and its delicious satire of many types of Scotch womanhood. Miss Ferrier would be a Doric Jane Austen were her skill in the evolution of a plot a

little better trained, and her delineation of character a little more sternly restrained from caricature. The story of her delicate tact in soothing the shattered faculties of Sir Walter Scott has endeared Miss Ferrier to thousands who never read her three amusing novels. Miss JANE PORTER reproduced Scott's historical effects in a kind of chromolithography, but not without some dashing merit of design. J. G. LOCKHART, though Scott's son-in-law, was not his disciple in four novels of a modern and more or less psychological class. *Adam Blair* is the best of these, and escapes the frigidity of the author's one classical romance, *Valerius*, a highly accomplished attempt to resuscitate domestic society under Trajan.

**Susan Edmonston Ferrier** (1782–1854) was the daughter of James Ferrier, factor to the Duke of Argyll, and was born in Edinburgh on the 7th of September 1782. Her father was afterwards associated with Sir Walter Scott as one of the clerks of session, and she became acquainted with the great novelist at least as early as 1811. In the inception of her first romance, *Marriage*, Miss Ferrier was helped by a Miss Clavering, but the actual writing was her own. This book was well received, and Sir Walter greeted the lady as "my sister shadow." After the marriage of her sisters and the death of her mother, Susan kept house for her father in Edinburgh until 1829. Her second novel, *The Inheritance*, appeared in 1824, and her third and last, *Destiny*, in 1831. During Sir Walter Scott's last illness Miss Ferrier was asked to come to Abbotsford to help to cheer him, and her aid was deeply appreciated, for, as Lockhart says, "she knew and loved him well, and she had seen enough of affliction akin to his to be well skilled in dealing with it." She left very interesting notes of her twenty years' friendship with Scott. Miss Ferrier lived on until November 5, 1854, when she died in her house in Edinburgh.

**Mary Brunton**

*From an Engraving*

**Mrs. Mary Brunton** (1778–1818) was the daughter of Colonel Balfour of Elwick, and was born at Burrey, in Orkney, on the 1st of November 1778. She married Mr. Brunton, the minister of Bolton, East Lothian. Her first novel, *Self-Control*, was published in 1811; her second, *Discipline*, in 1814; her third, *Emmeline*, was left unfinished at the time of her death, December 7, 1818.

**Jane Porter** (1776–1850), to whom Sir Walter Scott told stories of witches and warlocks when she was a little girl, became the author of two excessively popular romances, *Thaddeus of Warsaw*, 1803, and *The Scottish Chiefs*, 1810, which gave her fame throughout the whole of Europe, and, in spite of their stilted artificiality, are not yet forgotten. She was one of the gifted children of an Irish officer, whose widow came to Scotland, and brought up her family in an atmosphere of romantic culture. Jane Porter died, unmarried, at Bristol, on the 24th of May 1850.

**John Gibson Lockhart** (1794–1854) was the son of the minister of Cambusnethan in Lanarkshire, in the manse of which he was born on the 14th of July 1794. The family removed in his infancy to Glasgow, where he was educated, until in 1809 he went up to Balliol College, Oxford, where he took a bachelor's degree in 1817. But in 1813 he had settled into the study of Scotch law at Edinburgh, being called to the bar in 1816. In 1818 his famous friendship with Sir Walter Scott began, and in 1820 he married Scott's daughter, Sophia, and settled at Chiefswood, near Abbotsford. Encouraged by his illustrious father-in-law, Lockhart now gave himself seriously to literature, publishing *Valerius* in 1821 and *Adam Blair* in 1822. In 1825 he was appointed editor of the *Quarterly Review*, and came to live in London. His famous *Life of Sir Walter Scott* appeared in seven volumes between 1836 and 1838. In late years Lockhart suffered many distressing bereavements, and his own health gave way. He resigned the editorship of the *Quarterly*, and withdrew to Italy, whence he returned to die at Abbotsford on the 25th of November 1854. He was buried, at the feet of Sir Walter Scott, in Dryburgh Abbey.

**Jane Porter**

*After the Portrait by G. H. Harlow*

FROM THE "LIFE OF SIR WALTER SCOTT."

As I was dressing on the morning of Monday the 17th of September, Nicholson came into my room, and told me that his master had awoke in a state of composure and consciousness, and wished to see me immediately. I found him entirely himself, though in the last extreme of feebleness. His eye was clear and calm—every trace of the wild fire of delirium extinguished. "Lockhart," he said, "I may have but a minute to speak to you. My dear, be a good man—be virtuous—be religious—be a good man. Nothing else will give you any comfort when you come to lie here." He paused, and I said, "Shall I send for Sophia and Anne?" "No," said he, "don't disturb them. Poor souls! I know they were up all night—God bless you all." With this he sank into a very tranquil sleep, and, indeed, he scarcely afterwards gave any sign of consciousness, except for an instant on the arrival of his sons.

They, on learning that the scene was about to close, obtained a new lease of absence from their posts, and both reached Abbotsford on the 19th. About half-past one P.M. on the 21st of September, Sir Walter breathed his last, in the presence of all his children. It was a beautiful day—so warm, that every window was wide open—and so perfectly

still, that the sound of all others most delicious to his ear, the gentle ripple of the Tweed over its pebbles, was distinctly audible as we knelt around the bed, and his eldest son kissed and closed his eyes. No sculptor ever modelled a more majestic image of repose.

Romance was continued on somewhat the same lines which had made Mrs. Radcliffe and Lewis so popular. The grisly story of *Melmoth the Wanderer*, by Maturin, with its horrible commerce with demons, and its

**J. G. Lockhart**

*From a Drawing by D. Maclise*

scenes of bombastic passion, dates from 1820. Mrs. Percy Shelley, as befitted the wife of so great a magician of language, reached a purer style and a more impressive imagination in her ghastly romance of *Frankenstein*, which has given an image (usually misquoted) to everyday English speech, and may still be read with genuine terror and pity. A very spirited and yet gloomy novel, the *Anastasius* of Hope appeared at a time when the public were ablaze with the pretensions of Byron; the hero of this daring, piratical romance is all that the noble poet desired himself to be supposed to be. James Morier opened a series of tales of Oriental manners by the publication of *Hajji Baba;* the satire of Persian manners was brilliant enough and keen enough to call forth—so at least it was alleged—a remonstrance against this "very foolish business" from the Shah himself.

Morier was anxious to turn the enormous success of this his first book to account, but in further publications he was less successful. He tried to be serious, while his genius led him to the laughable.

Native talent and a hopeless absence of taste and judgment were never more strangely mingled than in John Galt, who, after vainly essaying every department of letters, published in middle life an admirable comic novel, the *Annals of the Parish*, and set all Scotland laughing. It is the autobiography of a country minister, and describes the development of society in a thriving lowland village with inimitable humour and whimsicality. Galt went on pouring forth novels almost until his death, but he never hit the target again so plainly in the bull's eye.

**Charles Robert Maturin** (1782–1824) was born obscurely in Dublin and entered Trinity College in 1798. He was ordained curate of Loughrea, and was then presented to a curacy at St. Peter's, Dublin. Here he attracted attention by his eccentricity and eloquence. He was very poor, and to eke out his income he began to publish preposterous "blood and thunder" romances, under the pseudonym of Dennis Jasper Murphy. In 1816, through the influence of Byron, his tragedy of *Bertram* was acted with great success at Drury Lane. His best novel, *Melmoth the Wanderer*, appeared in 1820. His life, which was very odd and wretched, closed in Dublin on the 30th of October 1824. **Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley** (1797–1851) was the daughter of William Godwin, by his first wife. She was born in London, ten days before the death of her mother, on the 30th of August 1797. She was under the age of seventeen when Shelley persuaded her to elope with him to France. After the suicide of Harriet, Shelley married Mary Godwin, at the close of 1816. After Shelley's death his widow returned to London and adopted literature as a profession. But she had already, in 1818, published her best work, *Frankenstein*. *Valyerga* appeared in 1823 and *The Last Man* in 1826. Her writings during the lifetime of Sir Timothy Shelley were, by an agreement, all anonymous. On the death of Sir Timothy, however, her son succeeded to the baronetcy, and her position became easy. She lived with her son until her death, 21st of February 1851, and was buried at Bournemouth.

**C. R. Maturin**

*After a Drawing by W. Brocas*

FROM "FRANKENSTEIN."

I had worked hard for nearly two years, for the sole purpose of infusing life into an inanimate body. For this I had deprived myself of rest and health. I had desired it with an ardour that far exceeded moderation, but now that I had finished, the beauty of the dream vanished, and breathless horror and disgust filled my heart. Unable to endure the aspect of the being I had created, I rushed out of the room and continued a long time traversing my bed-chamber, unable to compose my mind to sleep. At length lassitude

succeeded to the tumult I had before endured, and I threw myself on to the bed in my clothes, endeavouring to seek a few moments of forgetfulness. But it was in vain. I slept, indeed, but I was disturbed by the wildest dreams. I thought I saw Elizabeth, in the bloom of health, walking in the streets of Ingolstadt. Delighted and surprised, I embraced her; but as I imprinted the first kiss on her lips they became livid with the hue of death; her features appeared to change, and I thought that I held the corpse of my dead mother in my arms; a shroud enveloped her form, and I saw the grave-worms crawling in the folds of the flannel. I started from my sleep with horror, a cold dew covered my forehead, my teeth chattered, and every limb became convulsed when, by the dim and yellow light of the moon as it forced its way through the window-shutters, I beheld the wretch—the miserable monster I had created. He held up the curtain of the bed, and his eyes, if eyes they may be called, were fixed on me. His jaws opened, and he uttered some inarticulate sounds, while a grin wrinkled his cheeks. He might have spoken, but I did not hear; one hand was stretched out, seemingly to detain me, but I escaped and rushed downstairs. I took refuge in the courtyard belonging to the house which I inhabited, where I remained during the rest of the night, walking up and down in the greatest agitation, listening attentively, catching and fearing each sound as if it were to announce the approach of the demoniacal corpse to which I had so miserably given life.

**John Galt** (1779–1839) was the son of a captain in the West India trade, and was born at Irvine on the 2nd of May 1779. He became a Custom-house officer and then a journalist at Greenock, coming up to London to seek his fortune in 1804. For several years he led a wandering and uneasy life in Turkey, Greece, France, and finally Canada. He came back at last to Greenock, and died there on the 11th of April 1839. His life was one tangled skein of embarrassment and misspent activity. His best novels were the *Annals of the Parish*, 1821, and *The Entail*, 1823. **James Justinian Morier** (1780?–1849) was born at Smyrna, it is believed in 1780. He entered the diplomatic service, and was secretary of embassy in Persia, and long afterwards special commissioner in Mexico. He wrote many books, of which *The Adventures of Hajji Baba of Ispahan*, 1824–28, has alone remained famous. He died at Brighton, March 19, 1849. The great rival of *Hajji Baba* in popularity was *Anastasius*, 1819, the author of which was **Thomas Hope** (1770?–1831), a Dutch merchant, born in Amsterdam, who came early to England and made a great fortune here. Each of these three novelists identified themselves more or less with the Oriental adventures of Byron, who declared that he wept bitterly when he read *Anastasius*, partly because he had not written it, partly because Hope had.

**John Galt**

*After a Portrait by G. Hastings*

FROM GALT'S "ANNALS OF THE PARISH."

But the most memorable thing that befell among my people this year was the burning of the lint mill on the Lugton water, which happened, of all days in the year, on the self-same day that Miss Girzie Gilchrist, better known as Lady Skimmilk, hired the chaise from Mrs. Watts, of the New Inns of Irville, to go with her brother, the major, to consult the faculty in Edinburgh cencerning his complaints. For, as the chaise was coming by the mill, William Huckle, the miller that was, came flying out of the mill like a demented man, crying, Fire! and it was the driver that brought the melancholy tidings to the clachan. And melancholy they were, for the mill was utterly destroyed, and in it not a little of all that year's crop of lint in our parish. The first Mrs. Balwhidder lost upwards of twelve stone, which we had raised on the glebe with no small pains, watering it in the drouth, as it was intended for sarking to ourselves, and sheets and napery. A great loss indeed it was, and the vexation thereof had a visible effect on Mrs. Balwhidder's health, which from the spring had been in a dwining way. But for it, I think, she might have wrestled through the winter. However, it was ordered otherwise, and she was removed from mine to Abraham's bosom on Christmas Day, and buried on Hogmanay, for it was thought uncanny to have a dead corpse in the house on the New Year's Day. She was a worthy woman, studying with all her capacity to win the hearts of my people towards me; in which good work she prospered greatly, so that, when she died, there was not a single soul in the parish that was not contented with both my walk and conversation. Nothing could be more peaceable than the way we lived together. Her brother Andrew, a fine lad, I had sent to the college at Glasgow, at my own cost. When he came to the burial he stayed with me a month, for the manse after her decease was very dull. It was during this visit that he gave me an inkling of his wish to go out to India as a cadet; but the transactions anent that fall within the scope of another year, as well as what relates to her headstone, and the epitaph in metre, which I indicated myself thereon; John Truel the mason carving the same, as may be seen in the kirkyard, where it wants a little reparation and setting upright, having settled the wrong way when the second Mrs. Balwhidder was laid by her side. But I must not here enter upon an anticipation.

**Thomas Hope**

*After a Portrait by G. P. Harding*

**Lytton** Byron was scarcely dead before his influence began to display itself in the work of a multitude of writers of "fashionable" novels, dealing mainly with criminals of high birth, into the desperate texture of whose lives there was woven a thread of the ideal. In this school of fiction two young men rose to the highest distinction, and "thrilled the boys with dandy pathos" in a lavish profusion. Of these elegant and fluent novelists the younger made his appearance first, with *Vivian Grey*, in 1826, but his rival

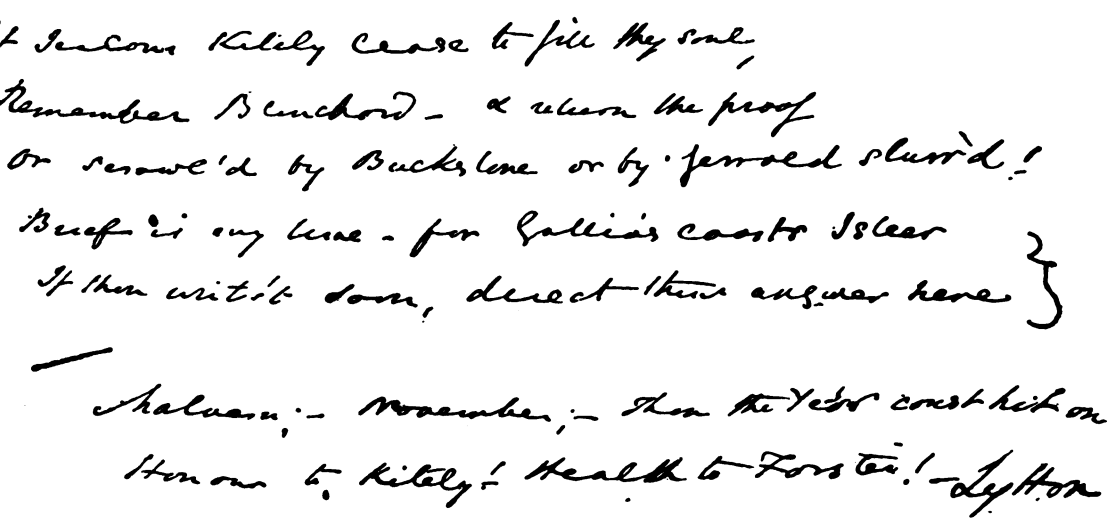
was close behind him with *Falkland* and *Pelham*. Through the next twenty years they raced neck by neck for the suffrages of the polite. In that day EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, afterwards the first Lord LYTTON, seemed a genius of the very highest order, but it was early perceived that his dandiacal attitude was not perfectly sincere, that the graces of his style were too laboured and prolix, and that the tone of his novels fostered national conceit and prejudice at the expense of truth. His sentiment was mawkish, his creations were unsubstantial and often preposterous. But the public liked the fastidious elaborateness of a gentleman who catered for their pleasures "with his fingers covered with dazzling rings, and his feet delightfully pinched in a pair of looking-glass boots"; and Bulwer Lytton certainly possessed extraordinary gifts of activity, versatility, and sensitiveness to the requirements of his readers. What has shattered the once-glittering dome of his reputation is a reaction against what early readers of *Zanoni* called his "fearfully beautiful word-painting," his hollow rhetoric, his puerile horrors. Towards the end of his glorious career Lord Lytton contrived to prune his literary extravagances, and his latest works are his best.

**Edward Bulwer**

*From an Engraving of the Portrait by D. Maclise at Knebworth*

The first **Lord Lytton (Edward George Earle Lytton Bulwer,** afterwards **Bulwer-Lytton),** 1803–1873, was the third and youngest son of General Bulwer of Heydon Hall, Norfolk; his mother was a Lytton of Knebworth in Herts. He was born in London on the 25th of May 1803. He was privately educated, under the eye of his gifted mother; at the age of seventeen he published *Ismael*, a collection of Byronic poems. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge, at Easter 1822, but removed later in the same year to Trinity Hall. He published *Delmour* anonymously in 1823; in 1825 he won the Chancellor's medal with a poem on *Sculpture*. It was after taking his degree, in 1826, that Bulwer wrote his first romantic novel, *Falkland*. In 1827 he married Rosina Doyle Wheeler, settled at Pangbourne, and devoted himself to literature, producing, in quick succession, *Pelham*, 1828; *The Disowned* and *Devereux*, 1829; and *Paul Clifford*, 1830. He was henceforth one of the most active and popular authors of the day, and he moved into London to be at the centre of his interests. He entered Parliament in 1831. The most prominent of his next batch of publications were *Eugene Aram*, 1832;

*Godolphin*, 1833; and *The Pilgrims of the Rhine*, 1834. Bulwer now turned to historical romance, and achieved a marvellous success with *The Last Days of Pompeii* in 1834, and *Rienzi* in 1835. His marriage had proved a very unlucky one, and in 1836 he obtained a judicial separation. The next few years were those in which Bulwer held the stage with *The Duchess de la Vallière*, 1836; *The Lady of Lyons*, 1838; *Richelieu* and *The Rightful Heir*, 1839; and *Money*, 1840. In 1838 his political services were rewarded with a baronetcy, and in 1843, upon the death of his mother, he came into the Knebworth estates and assumed the name of Lytton. He re-entered Parliament in 1852, and served for some time as Colonial Secretary. In 1866 he was created Baron Lytton of Knebworth. Of his later



MS. Verses by Lytton

writings may be chronicled here, *Ernest Maltravers*, 1837; *Zanoni*, 1842; *The Last of the Barons*, 1843; *The Caxtons*, 1849; *My Novel*, 1853; *A Strange Story*, 1862; *The Coming Race*, 1871; and *Kenelm Chillingly*, 1873. Towards the close of his life he resided at Torquay, where he died on the 18th of January 1873, and was buried in Westminster Abbey. Bulwer-Lytton was a man of unbounded energy and versatility, who cultivated in public the languor of a dandy and the affectations of a fop to conceal the intensity with which he pursued his professional career. He lived with wasteful violence, and long before his death he suffered from a physical decay which his mental vigour belied. On other men of letters, such as Tennyson and Thackeray, his airs and graces, his schemes to "aristocratise the community," and the amazing oddities of his garb and speech, produced an effect that was almost maddening.

FROM "PELHAM."

Well, gentle reader (I love, by-the-bye, as you already perceive, that old-fashioned courtesy of addressing you)—well, to finish this part of my life, which, as it treats rather of my attempts at reformation than my success in error, must begin to weary you exceedingly, I acquired, more from my uncle's conversation than the books we read, a

My dearest Friend.

Certainly, at all times & on all occasions, as they can make me happier than themselves, that I can in any way aid your objects or wishes, when shall upon work the articles?
I should be delighted to dine with you Sunday next.
Will you tell [redacted]
Dowry that I am going to dedicate the new Edition of Godolphin to him if he will let me. Yrs Ever ELB

Letter from Bulwer to Lady Blessington, 1833 (or 1834)

sufficient acquaintance with the elements of knowledge to satisfy myself, and to please my instructor. And I must say, in justification of my studies and my tutor, that I derived one benefit from them which has continued with me to this hour—viz., I obtained a clear knowledge of moral principle. Before that time, the little ability I possessed only led me into acts, which, I fear, most benevolent reader, thou hast already sufficiently condemned; my good feelings—for I was not naturally bad—never availed me the least when present temptation came into my way. I had no guide but passion; no rule but the impulse of the moment. What else could have been the result of my education? If I was immoral, it was because I was never taught morality? Nothing, perhaps, is less innate than virtue. I own that the lessons of my uncle did not work miracles—that, living in the world, I have not separated myself from its errors and its follies: the vortex was too strong—the atmosphere too contagious; but I have at least avoided the crimes into which my temper would most likely have driven me. I ceased to look upon the world as a game one was to play fairly, if possible—but where a little cheating was readily allowed: I no longer divorced the interests of other men from my own: if I endeavoured to blind them, it was neither by unlawful means, nor for a purely selfish end:—if—but come, Henry Pelham, thou hast praised thyself enough for the present; and, after all, thy future adventures will best tell if thou art really amended.

*Disraeli*

To early contemporaries the novels of BENJAMIN DISRAELI, long afterwards Earl of BEACONSFIELD, seemed more extravagant and whimsical than even those of Bulwer. Disraeli, too, belonged to the great company of the dandies—to the Brummels and Lauzuns of literature. His early novels were baffling miscellanies of the wildest and the most foppish folly combined with rare political wit and a singular clairvoyance. A like inconsistency marked their style, which is now almost crazy in its incoherence, and now of a florid but restrained beauty to which Bulwer, with all his machinery of rhetoric, never attained. *Contarini Fleming* may be said to record a step towards the emancipation of English romance, in its extraordinary buoyancy of Byronic stimulus. But as a writer, Disraeli was at his best and steadily improving from *Venetia* to *Tancred*. In these novels he is less tawdry in his ornament, less glittering in his affectation of Voltairean epigram, less inflated and impracticable than in his earlier, and certainly than in his two latest novels, those curious fruits of his old age. The dandy style, of which Barbey d'Aurevilly was the contemporary type in France, is best studied in England in

**Benjamin Disraeli**

*From a Portrait taken when a young man*

Disraeli, whose novels, though they no longer appeal to the masses, preserve better than Bulwer's the attention of cultivated readers. In these Byronic novelists, who preserved for their heroes "the dear corsair expression, half savage, half soft," love of the romance of pure adventure was handed down, across Dickens and Thackeray, and in an indirect way Bulwer and Disraeli are the progenitors of the Ouidas and Rider Haggards of a later age.

**Benjamin Disraeli** (1804–1881), **Earl of Beaconsfield,** was the son of Isaac Disraeli and of his wife Maria Basevi. He was born in London on the 21st of December 1804. The place of his birth is uncertain; among the addresses claimed for it are 215 Upper Street, Islington, and 6 John Street, Bedford Row. In 1817 his father inherited a fortune, and moved into a large house in Bloomsbury Square. At the same time the family left the Jewish communion, and on the 31st of July Disraeli was baptized into the English Church. He was sent to a Unitarian school at Walthamstow, and in 1821 he was articled to a solicitor in Old Jewry. When it was still not decided what profession he should choose, he wrote *Vivian Grey*, 1826, an absurd and daring novel, which produced a considerable sensation. Disraeli now became the victim of a curious illness, a sort of vertigo, which made professional study impossible to him. He retired to his father's country-house at Bradenham, in Buckinghamshire, for several years. Here he wrote several of his best early works, *Popanilla*, *Ixion in Heaven*, and *The Young Duke*. As his health grew no better, foreign travel was recommended, and in 1828 he started for the Mediterranean, lingering long, and reaching Jerusalem in 1831. With health restored, Disraeli came back to England and burst upon London as a literary lion. His fantastic appearance—"velvet coat thrown wide open, shirt collar turned down in Byronic fashion, elaborate embroidered waistcoat, from which issued voluminous folds of frill, black hair pomaded and elaborately curled, and person redolent with perfume"—increased the curiosity with which his books were read. *Contarini Fleming* was published in 1832, *Alroy* in 1833, and *The Revolutionary Epic* in 1834. Disraeli dazzled society with an extraordinary mixture of ardour and calculated affectation. In 1837 he published *Venetia* and *Henrietta Temple*, and entered Parliament. In 1838 he married a widow,

House in Upper Street, Islington, the supposed Birthplace of Disraeli

Mrs. Wyndham Lewis, who proved the most devoted of wives, and who died as Viscountess Beaconsfield in 1872. Disraeli, in spite of increasing political distractions, continued to write novels—*Coningsby*, 1844; *Sybil*, 1845; and *Tancred*, 1847—until he became leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons, and could spare no more leisure for this kind of work. He was silent as an imaginative writer for nearly a quarter of a century, climbing one by one to the pinnacle of political celebrity. In 1868 he became Prime Minister for a short time. In an interval of repose Disraeli turned to literature again, and published in 1870 the novel of *Lothair*, the most famous book of its year. He became Prime Minister for the second time in 1874, and enjoyed a lengthy period of power, in the course of which, in 1876, he was raised to the peerage as Earl of Beaconsfield. The Tories fell in 1880, and Lord Beaconsfield withdrew to his estate at Hughenden, where he took up an unfinished novel, *Endymion*, and immediately finished it. He now lived as a country gentleman, devoted to "his peacocks, his swans, his lake, and his chalk stream," though without definitely retiring from politics. He was disappointed, however, and his energy was failing. A severe chill, acting upon gout, was fatal to him, and he died on the 19th of April 1881. He was offered a public funeral, but he had left instructions that he was to be buried beside his wife at Hughenden. Disraeli was a man of extraordinary physique, "lividly pale," with snaky clusters of jet-black hair, "eyes as black as Erebus, and the most mocking, lying-in-wait sort of expression conceivable." In wit, in clairvoyance, and in a sort of inspired impertinence, he was without an equal in his own generation.

FROM "TANCRED."

The moon has sunk behind the Mount of Olives, and the stars in the darker sky shine doubly bright over the sacred city. The all-pervading stillness is broken by a breeze that seems to have travelled over the plain of Sharon from the sea. It wails among the tombs, and sighs among the cypress groves. The palm-tree trembles as it passes, as if it were a spirit of woe. Is it the breeze that has travelled over the plain of Sharon from the sea?

Or is it the haunting voice of prophets mourning over the city they could not save? Their spirits surely would linger on the land where their Creator had deigned to dwell, and over whose impending fate Omnipotence had shed human tears. From this Mount! Who can but believe that, at the midnight hour, from the summit of the Ascension, the great departed of Israel assemble to gaze upon the battlements of their mystic city? There might be counted heroes and sages, who need shrink from no rivalry with the brightest and the wisest of other lands; but the lawgiver of the time of the Pharaohs, whose laws are still obeyed; the monarch, whose reign has ceased for three thousand years, but whose wisdom is a proverb in all nations of the earth; the teacher, whose doctrines have modelled civilised Europe; the greatest of legislators, the greatest of administrators, and the greatest of reformers; what race, extinct or living, can produce three such men as these!

The last light is extinguished in the village of Bethany. The wailing breeze has become a moaning wind; a white film spreads over the purple sky; the stars are veiled, the stars are hid; all becomes as dark as the waters of Kedron and the valley of Jehoshaphat. The tower of David merges into obscurity; no longer glitter the minarets of the mosque of Omar; Bethesda's angelic waters, the gate of Stephen, the street of sacred sorrow, the hill of Salem, and the heights of Scopas can no longer be discerned. Alone in the increasing darkness, while the very line of the walls gradually eludes the eye, the church of the Holy Sepulchre is a beacon light.

And why is the church of the Holy Sepulchre a beacon light? Why, when it is already past the noon of darkness, when every soul slumbers in Jerusalem, and not a sound disturbs the deep repose, except the howl of the wild dog crying to the wilder wind: why

is the cupola of the sanctuary illumined, though the hour has long since been numbered, when pilgrims there kneel and monks pray?

An armed Turkish guard are bivouacked in the court of the church; within the church itself, two brethren of the convent of Terra Santa keep holy watch and ward; while, at the tomb beneath, there kneels a solitary youth, who prostrated himself at sunset, and who will there pass unmoved the whole of the sacred night.

*Peacock* A very peculiar talent—in its fantastic nature, perhaps, more delicate and original than any of these—was that of THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK, the learned friend and correspondent of Shelley. This interesting satirist displayed a survival of the eighteenth-century temper in nineteenth-century forms, and thought of Voltaire when the rest of the world was thinking of Scott, whom Peacock considered "amusing only because he misrepresented everything." The new was singularly odious to him; it was only in the old, the classical, the Attic, that he could take any pleasure. The poetry of Peacock, both serious and ludicrous, has a charm of extreme elegance; but the qualities of his distinguished mind are best observed in his curious satirical or grotesque romances, seven in number, of which *Headlong Hall* was the first, and *Nightmare Abbey* doubtless the most entertaining. His latest novel, *Gryll Grange*, appeared so late as 1860, and Peacock outlived all his contemporaries, dying at a great age in 1866. He totally disregarded English traditions of romance-writing, and followed the eighteenth-century type of French *conte*. In his eccentric, discursive way, he is the most ingenious English writer of the age, and after almost passing into oblivion, he is once more becoming a prominent favoriute with readers of fastidious taste.

**Thomas Love Peacock**

*From a Photograph*

**Thomas Love Peacock** (1785–1866) was the only child of Samuel Peacock, a London merchant, and his wife, Sarah Love. He was born at Weymouth on the 18th of October 1785. His father dying in 1788, the child was brought up at Chertsey by his grandfather and his mother. He was educated for a little while at a private school at Englefield, but attended no public school or university. With the consent of his mother, he educated himself, becoming one of the first classical scholars of his time. In 1808 he was appointed secretary to Sir Home Popham, and in 1812 his friendship with Shelley began. He had already published several volumes of no importance; his real talent was now revealed to him, and he issued *Headlong*

beatings of their
~~sounds of~~ multitudinous feet — mingled with the trampling of horses, and the yet unseen-
the full sounds of the bugles. Last appeared the cavalry,
issuing from the woods, and ranging themselves in a
semicircle, from horn to horn of the rope fencing. The
open space, was filled with deer,
terrified by the chace, confused by their own
numbers, and rushing in all directions. the greater part
The ~~many~~ through
the park openings many trying to leap the rope fencing,
in which a few were hurt, and one or two succeeded in
escaping to their old haunts, most probably to furnish
Robin Hood with his last venison feast. By degrees, the
mass grew thinner: at last, all had disappeared: the
rope fencing shut up the parks for the night: the cavalry
rode off towards Windsor: and all again was silent.

This was, without any exception, the most ~~beautiful~~
beautiful sight I ever witnessed: but I saw it with
deep regret: for, with the expulsion of the deer, the life of
the old scenes was gone, and I have always looked back
on that day, as the last day of Windsor Forest.

T. L. Peacock.

Page of Peacock's MS.

*Hall* in 1816; this was followed by *Melincourt* in 1817 and *Nightmare Abbey* in 1818. In 1819 Peacock secured a place in the East India House, and in 1823 settled at Lower Halliford, which was his home for the remainder of his long life. He published the remarkable poem called *Rhododaphne* in 1818, and other novels, *Maid Marian*, 1822; *The Misfortunes of Elphin*, 1829; *Crochet Castle*, 1831; and after thirty years' retirement, *Gryll Grange* in 1861. All the works here mentioned appeared in the first instance anonymously. Peacock died on the 23rd of January 1866.

FROM "MAID MARIAN."

"The abbot, in his alb arrayed," stood at the altar in the abbey-chapel of Rubygill, with all his plump, sleek, rosy friars, in goodly lines disposed, to solemnize the nuptials of the beautiful Matilda Fitzwater, daughter of the Baron of Arlingford, with the noble Robert Fitz-Ooth, Earl of Locksley and Huntingdon. The abbey of Rubygill stood in a picturesque valley, at a little distance from the western boundary of Sherwood Forest, in a spot which seemed adapted by nature to the retreat of monastic mortification, being on the banks of a fine trout-stream, and in the midst of woodland coverts, abounding with excellent game. The bride, with her father and attendant maidens, entered the chapel, but the earl had not arrived. The baron was amazed, and the bridemaidens were disconcerted. Matilda feared that some evil had befallen her lover, but felt no diminution of her confidence in his honour and love. Through the open gates of the chapel she looked down the narrow road that wound along the side of the hill; and her ear was the first that heard the distant trampling of horses, and her eye was the first that caught the glitter of snowy plumes, and the light of polished spears. "It is strange," thought the baron, "that the earl should come in this martial array to his wedding"; but he had not long to meditate on the phenomenon, for the foaming steeds swept up to the gate like a whirlwind, and the earl, breathless with speed, and followed by a few of his yeomen, advanced to his smiling bride. It was then no time to ask questions, for the organ was in full peal, and the choristers were in full voice.

The fourth decade of this century was, on the whole, a period of rest and exhaustion in the literature of this country. In poetry it was marked by the disappearance into silence of those who had done most to make the age what it was, a time of progress and revolt. The younger poets were dead, their elder brethren were beginning to pass away, and those who survived the longest, in particular Wordsworth and Landor, continued to add to the bulk, but not signally to the value of their works. Yet Tennyson, little observed or praised, was now producing the most exquisite and the most brilliantly varied of his lyrics. Discouraged at his reception, he had published, when this chapter closes, nothing since 1833. The solitary young poet who deserved to be mentioned in the same breath, Elizabeth Barrett, was famous before 1840, but not for those pieces of which her riper taste chiefly approved, or those for which posterity is still admiring her after sixty years. In this lull of the poetic world the voice of Robert Browning was yet unheard, though it had spoken out in *Paracelsus* and *Strafford*. But the sportive fancy of THOMAS HOOD, already nearing the close of his brief life, was highly appreciated, and PRAED, though still uncollected, had left a splendid memory to his friends.

*Hood* Where poets were so few, the pure talent of HARTLEY COLERIDGE, the greater S. T. Coleridge's eldest, unhappy son, may claim a word. A group of dramatist and lyrical writers, among whom BEDDOES is by far the greatest, link the generation of Keats and Shelley with that of Tennyson and the Brownings; but most of them are nebulous, and the most eminent mere asteroids in comparison with the planets which preceded and followed them.

**Thomas Hood** (1799–1845) belonged to a family of Perthshire peasants. His father was a small publisher in the Poultry, where the poet was born on the 23rd of May 1799. He received some education at various private schools. In 1811 he lost his father and his elder brother, and his mother moved to Islington. Already the health of Thomas, who came of a very unsound family, was giving anxiety, and he was sent to live in Dundee. He grew so much stronger that in 1818 he was able to come back to London apparently cured, and he began to study to be an engraver. But he was drawn to literature, and in 1821 began to act as sub-editor to the "London Magazine." The death of his mother now left him in charge of a family of four sisters; in 1825 he married Jane, the sister of John Hamilton Reynolds, the poet and friend of Keats. This was the year of Hood's earliest appearance as an author with the anonymous *Odes and Addresses to Great People.* He was at this time introduced by Lamb to Coleridge as "a silentish young man, an invalid," but he was beginning to be well-known as a wit and punster, and in 1826 he achieved a partial success with *Whims and Oddities.* In 1827 the only book of serious poetry ever published by Hood, *The Plea of the Midsummer Fairies,* appeared, dedicated to Charles Lamb. None of these publications, however, really took the town, and Hood withdrew for fifteen years from poetical composition. In 1829 the Hoods

**Thomas Hood**

*After the Portrait in the National Portrait Gallery*

went to live at Winchmore Hill, near Enfield, and it was from this retreat that he began to issue the *Comic Annual;* they moved in 1832 to Lake House, Wanstead, a romantic old building in a situation most unfavourable to Hood's health. He made it the site of his novel, *Tylney Hall*, in 1834. At the beginning of the next year, owing to the unexplained "failure of a firm," Hood became ruined and had to leave England to escape his creditors; he settled at Coblenz, and afterwards at Ostend, until 1840, when he returned to England. At Christmas, 1843, Hood became suddenly famous as the author, in "Punch," of *The Song of the Shirt.* But his success came too late; he was already dying of a slow disease of the heart, complicated by anxiety and trouble. After a long illness, rendered doubly distressing by poverty, Hood died at Hampstead on the 2nd of May 1845. Hood was not witty in society, but "thin and deaf, and very silent," with a solemn pale face and melancholy eyes.

**Mrs. T. Hood (Jane Reynolds)**

*After the Portrait in the National Portrait Gallery*

HOOD'S LAST STANZAS, WRITTEN FEBRUARY 1845.

Farewell, Life! My senses swim,
And the world is growing dim;
Thronging shadows crowd the light,
Like the advent of the night,—
Colder, colder, colder still,
Upward steals a vapour chill—
Strong the earthy odour grows—
I smell the mould above the rose!

Welcome, Life! the Spirit strives!
Strength returns, and hope revives;
Cloudy fears and shapes forlorn
Fly like shadows at the morn,—

O'er the earth there comes a bloom,
Sunny light for sullen gloom,
Warm perfume for vapour cold—
I smell the rose above the mould!

C. Dickens Esqre
To ~~Boz~~
On his Departure for America

Pshaw!—away with leaf & berry,
And the sober-sided cup!
Bring a Goblet, and bright sherry
And a bumper fill me up!
Thought a pledge I had to shiver,
And the longest ever was!
Ere his Vessel leaves our river
I will drink a health to Boz!

Here's success to all his antics
Since it pleases him to roam,
And to paddle o'er Atlantics,
After such a sale at home!—
May he shun all rocks whatever,
And each shallow sand that lurks,
And his Passage be as clever
As the best among his Works.

T Hood.

31. Decr
1841.

**Verses of Hood's to Charles Dickens on his Departure for America**

At one time the claim of **Joanna Baillie** (1762–1851) to be included among the English poets was almost universally conceded. Her *Plays on the Passions* (1798–1812) were successful, both as books, and as acted by Kemble and Mrs. Siddons. But neither these nor her once greatly praised ballads have retained

their charm. **Hartley Coleridge** (1796–1849) was the eldest son of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and was born at Clevedon in Somerset on the 19th of September 1796. He was brought up in the Lakes among the great friends of his father, and early attracted the admiration of Wordsworth, Southey, Lamb, and De Quincey by his brilliant precocity. After going to school at Ambleside, he proceeded in 1815 to New Inn Hall, Oxford, afterwards joining Merton College. In 1819 he was elected a fellow of Oriel, but was deprived of his fellowship in the following year, under distressing circumstances, and spent some years very painfully in London. In 1823 he was persuaded to return to Ambleside, and for some years he lived precariously by teaching. During a brief experience as reader to a publisher at Leeds, Hartley Coleridge appeared as an author for the first and last time with his *Biographia Borealis* and his *Poems*, both dated 1833. He lived quietly and meekly at Grasmere, until his death on the 6th of January 1849. **Winthrop Mackworth Praed** (1802–1839), a brilliant figure at Eton and at Trinity College, Cambridge, was the most graceful writer of society verses between Prior and Mr. Austin Dobson. The only important work he published in book-form in his lifetime was *Lilian*, 1823. Praed's poems were first collected after his death, and in America, in 1844. **Thomas Lovell Beddoes** (1803–1849) was the eldest son of Dr. Thomas Beddoes, a famous physician of Bristol, where the poet was born on the 20th of July 1803; his mother was a sister of Maria Edgeworth. He was educated at Bath Grammar School and at the Charterhouse, and began to devote himself to poetry at the age of fourteen. In 1820 he proceeded to Pembroke College, Oxford, where in 1821 he published *The Improvisators*. This was followed in 1822 by *The Bride's Tragedy*. These are the only books of his which appeared in Beddoes' lifetime. He took his degree in 1825, left Oxford, and determined to devote himself to medicine. The greater part of the rest of his life was spent in Germany in isolation from all his family and English friends; he took his medical degree at Würzburg in 1832, and practised as a physician in Zürich. He became extremely melancholy, restless, and neurotic, formed extravagant relations, and on the 26th of January 1849 committed suicide in the hospital at Basle. His principal work, *Death's Jest-Book*, was published in 1850, and his *Poems* in 1851. He was a very mysterious person of whom little definite is known; in late life he "let his beard grow, and looked like Shakespeare." **Richard Henry** (or **Hengist**) **Horne** (1803–1884) was born in London on the 1st of January 1803. He was taught at the school in Edmonton

**Joanna Baillie**

*After a Portrait by Sir W. Newton*

which Keats had recently left, and to the end of his life would boast of having thrown a snowball at that great man. Horne early drifted upon a life of restless and prolonged adventure. He volunteered as a midshipman in the war of Mexican independence, and fought in 1839 against Spain. He afterwards wandered long in the United States and in Canada; and after he had returned to London and adopted the profession of letters, the gold craze took him in 1852 to Australia. His earliest publication of value was the romantic drama of *Cosmo de Medici* in 1837. His epic of *Orion*, 1843, was sold at the published price of a farthing, and achieved wide notoriety. His drama of *Judas Iscariot* was printed in 1848. Horne, who was a little man of unusual physical strength and endurance, became in later days an odd figure with his milk-white ringlet-curls and abrupt gestures. His friendship with Elizabeth Barrett Browning resulted in certain interesting conjunct productions, particularly in the letters published in 1876. Horne died at Margate, from the result of an accident, on the 13th of March 1884.

**Richard Horne**

*After a Portrait by Margaret Gillies*

SONNET BY HARTLEY COLERIDGE.

When we were idlers with the loitering rills,
The need of human love we little noted:
Our love was nature; and the peace that floated
On the white mist, and dwelt upon the hills,
To sweet accord subdued our wayward wills:
One soul was ours, one mind, one heart devoted,
That, wisely doating, ask'd not why it floated,
And ours the unknown joy, which knowing kills.
But now I find, how dear thou wert to me;
That man is more than half of nature's treasure,
Of that fair Beauty which no eye can see,
Of that sweet music which no ear can measure;
And now the streams may sing for others' pleasure,
The hills sleep on in their eternity.

SONG FROM THE FRAGMENT OF "TORRISMOND" OF BEDDOES.

How many times do I love thee, dear?
Tell me how many thoughts there be
In the atmosphere
Of a new-fall'n year,
Whose white and sable hours appear
The latest flake of Eternity:—
So many times do I love thee, dear.

How many times do I love, again?
Tell me how many heads there are
In a silver chain
Of evening rain
Unravelled from the tumbling main
And threading the eye of a yellow star :—
So many times do I love, again.

FROM HORNE'S "ORION."

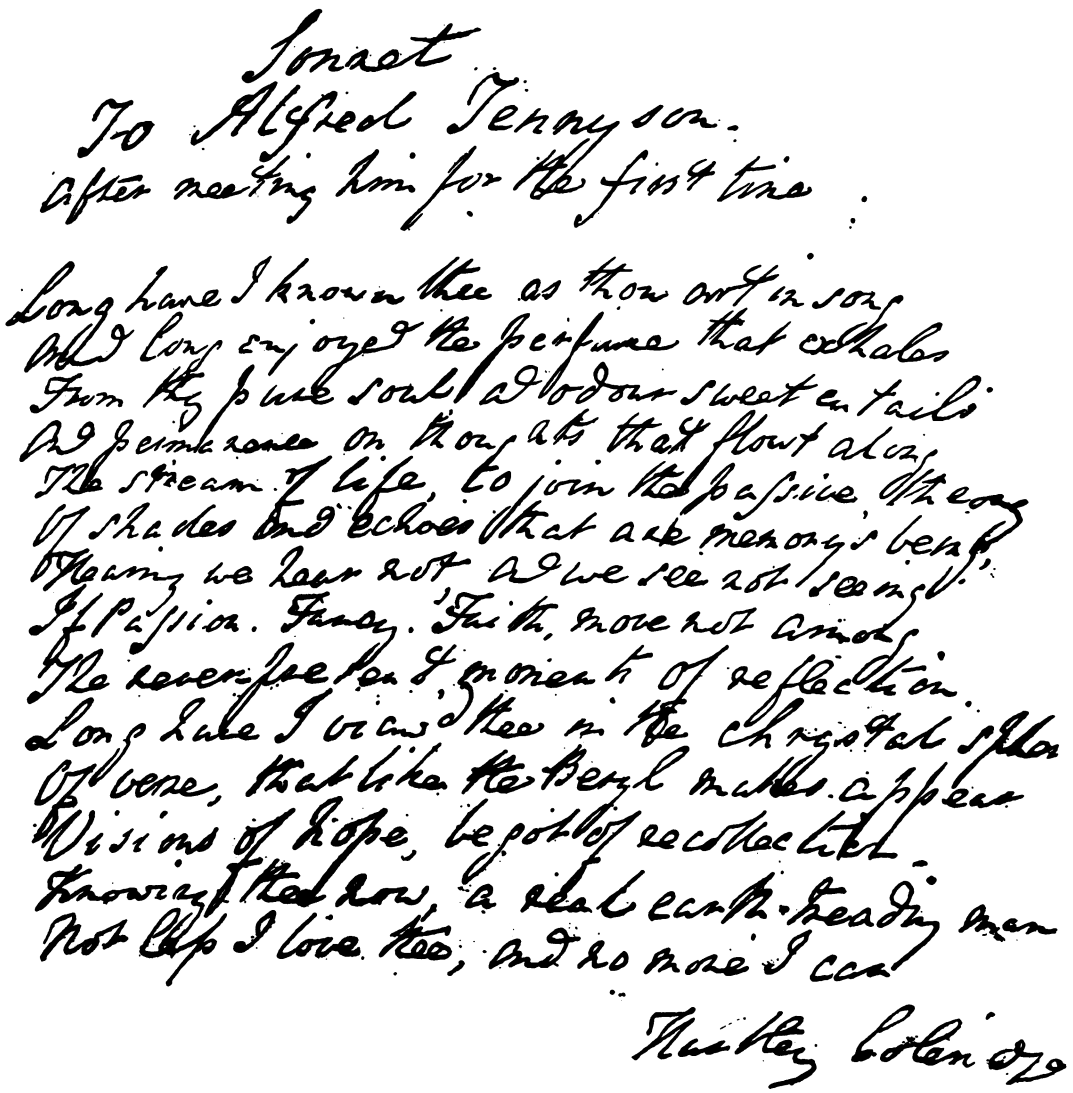
At length, when night came folding round the scene,
And golden lights grew red and terrible,
Flashed torch and spear, while reed-pipes deeper blew
Sonorous dirges and melodious storm,
And timbrels groaned and jangled to the tones
Of high-sustaining horns,—then, round the blaze,
Their shadows brandishing afar and athwart
Over the level space and up the hills,
Six Giants held portentous dance, nor ceased
Till one by one in bare Bacchante arms,
Brimful of nectar, helplessly they rolled
Deep down oblivion. Sleep absorbed their souls.

In prose more vigorous influences were at work. In 1825 Macaulay marked an epoch in criticism by contributing to the *Edinburgh Review* his elaborate article on Milton, the earliest example in English of the modern *étude*, or monograph in miniature, which has since become so popular a province of letters. When our period closes, Macaulay is a Cabinet minister. His career as an essayist was mainly prior to 1840, at which date he had shown himself neither ballad-writer nor historian. In his famous reviews he created a species of literature, partly biographical, partly critical, which had an unrivalled effect in raising the average of cultivation. Countless readers found in the pages of Macaulay's *Essays* their earliest stimulus to independent thought and the humane study of letters. Carlyle, five years the senior of Macaulay, had been much slower in reaching the great mass of the public. His graceful *Life of Schiller* (1825) having failed to achieve a world-wide sensation, Carlyle deliberately and most successfully set himself to insist upon attention by

**Hartley Coleridge**

*After a Portrait in the possession of Ernest Hartley Coleridge, Esq.*

adopting a style of extreme eccentricity, full of Germanisms, violently abrupt and tortuously parenthetical, a lingo which had to be learned like a foreign language. In the reception ultimately given to *Sartor Resartus* (1834) he was assured of the success of his stratagem, and he continued, to his


Sonnet
To Alfred Tennyson.
after meeting him for the first time

Long have I known thee as thou oft in song
Mid lonely joy the perfume that exhales
From thy pure soul & odour sweet entails
And permanence on thoughts that float along
The stream of life, to join the passive throng
Of shades and echoes that ask memory's bent
Hearing we hear not & we see not seeing
If passion. Fancy. Faith, move not among
The reverie-led & moonèd of reflection.
Long like I once did see in the chrysolite
Of verse, that like the Beryl makes appear
Visions of hope, be-pictured recollection
Knowing the low, a dear earth-treading man
Not else I love thee, and no more I can

Hartley Coleridge

**Sonnet by Hartley Coleridge to Tennyson**

eminent advantage, to write, not in English, but in Carlylese for the remainder of his life.

The names crowd upon us as we endeavour to distinguish what literature was when Queen Victoria ascended the throne. Marryat was at the climax of his rapidly won nautical fame; the cavaliers of G. P. R. James

riding down innumerable lonely roads; the first Lord Lytton was in the midst of the series of his elaborately heroical romances, not cast in gold, perhaps, but richly parcel-gilt; Disraeli had just culminated in *Henrietta Temple*. Such were the forces which up to 1840 were the most active in purely popular literature. None of them, perhaps, was of the highest order either in imagination or in style, but each in his own way was repeating and emphasising the lesson of the romantic revolution of 1798.

LORD TENNYSON,

FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY F. HOLLYER, AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY G.F. WATTS R.A.

undulations. Nowhere is it more difficult to know whom to mention and whom to omit.

In poetry, a body of writing which had been kept back by the persistent public neglect of its immediate inspirers, Shelley and Keats, took advantage of the growing fame of these authors to insist on recognition for itself. Hence, although Alfred Tennyson had been a published author since 1826, the real date of his efflorescence as a great, indisputable power in poetry is 1842; Elizabeth Barrett, whose first volume appeared in 1825, does not make her definite mark until 1844; and Robert Browning, whose *Pauline* is of 1833, begins to find readers and a discreet recognition in 1846, at the close of the series of his *Bells and Pomegranates*. These three writers, then, formed a group which it is convenient to consider together: greatly dissimilar in detail, they possessed distinctive qualities in common; we may regard them as we do Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey, or Byron, Shelley, and Keats. The vogue, however, of this latest cluster of poets was destined to develop more slowly, perhaps, but much more steadily and for a longer period than that of any previous trio. After fifty years of production and increasing popularity two of them were still amongst us, in the enjoyment of an almost unparalleled celebrity. It is important, so far as possible, to clear away from our minds the impression which half a century of glory has produced, and to see how these poets struck their first candid admirers in the forties.

*Tennyson*

In the first place, it is obvious that their unquestionable merits were dimmed by what were taken to be serious defects of style. Oddly enough, it was ALFRED TENNYSON who was particularly assailed for faults which we now cheerfully admit in Miss Barrett, who to her own contemporaries seemed the most normal of the three. That Keats was "misdirected" and "unripe" had been an unchallenged axiom of the critical faculty; but here were three young writers who were calmly accepting the formulas of Keats and of "his deplorable friend Mr. Shelley," and throwing contempt on those so authoritatively laid down by the *Edinburgh Review*. Tennyson was accused of triviality, affectation, and quaintness. But his two volumes of 1842 were published at a moment when public taste was undergoing a radical change. The namby-pamby of the thirties was disgusting the younger men, and the new burden imposed by the Quarterlies was being

**Alfred Tennyson**

*From a Portrait by Samuel Laurence*, 1838

tossed from impatient shoulders. When R. H. Horne, in 1844, called upon Englishmen to set aside "the thin gruel of Kirke White" and put to their lips "the pure Greek wine of Keats," he not only expressed a daring conviction to which many timider spirits responded, but he enunciated a critical opinion which the discussions of fifty years have not superseded.

What such candid spirits delighted in in the Tennyson of 1842 was the sensuous comprehensiveness of his verse. He seemed to sum up, in a composite style to which he gradually gave a magic peculiarly his own, the

**Somersby Rectory, the Birthplace of Tennyson**

finest qualities of the school that had preceded him. He studied natural phenomena as closely as Wordsworth had, his melodies were almost as liquid and aerial as those of Coleridge, he could tell a story as well as Campbell, his songs were as pure and ecstatic as Shelley's, and for depth and splendour of colour Keats hardly surpassed him. As soon, therefore, as the general public came to recognise him, he enchanted it. To an enthusiastic listener the verse of Tennyson presently appeared to sum up every fascinating pleasure which poetry was competent to offer, or if anything was absent, it was supposed to be the vigour of Byron or the manly freshness of Scott. To the elements he collected from his predecessors he added a sense of decorative beauty, faintly archaic and Italian, an unprecedented refinement and high finish in the execution of verse, and a philosophical sympathy with the broad outlines of such

social and religious problems as were engaging the best minds of the age. Those who approached the poetry of Tennyson, then, were flattered by its polished and distinguished beauty, which added to their own self-respect, and were repelled by none of those austerities and violences which had estranged the early readers of Wordsworth and Shelley.

**Alfred Tennyson,** the first Lord Tennyson (1809–1892), was the fourth of the twelve children of the Rev. George Tennyson and his wife, Elizabeth Fytche. He was born in the rectory of Somersby, in Lincolnshire, on the 6th of August 1809. In 1815 he was sent to the Louth grammar school, and five years later returned home to be prepared for college by his father. He began to write verses, copiously, when he was twelve, in company with his elder brothers, Frederick (1807–1898) and Charles (1808–1879). The three combined in a volume, which was nevertheless called *Poems by Two Brothers*, in 1827. In February of the next year Charles and Alfred proceeded to Trinity College, Cambridge, where Tennyson soon became the centre of a brilliant group of friends. In 1829 he gained the Chancellor's Medal for his poem called *Timbuctoo*, and in 1830 appeared his *Poems chiefly Lyrical*. Among his leading friends at Cambridge were Trench, Monckton Milnes, Spedding, Thompson, FitzGerald, and above all, A. H. Hallam. The volume of 1830 attracted little outside notice, except from those to whom these friends introduced it, but it won the close attention of S. T. Coleridge. In the summer of this year Tennyson and Hallam volunteered in the army of the Spanish insurgent, Torrijos, and marched about in the Pyrenees, but were never under fire. Tennyson left Cambridge in February 1831, and made Somersby his residence, his father at this time dying, but the family being allowed to stay in the rectory until 1837. Tennyson was now in excellent health and at the height of his genius; he was writing abundantly and delighting in the friendship of Hallam, who was engaged to the poet's sister, Emily. The result of these months was given to the world in the marvellous *Poems* of 1833, a book which, in spite of the trans-

**Somersby Church**

**Clevedon Church**

cendent beauty of its contents, met with a reception from the critics which greatly depressed and angered the poet. In the subsequent autumn (September 15, 1833), Arthur Hallam died very suddenly in a hotel in Vienna. Tennyson's nerves were violently shaken, and after this event his health "became variable and his spirits indifferent." Until after the burial of Hallam at Clevedon in January 1834 he wrote nothing; but as his mind grew calmer, he began the *Idylls of the King* and *In Memoriam*, and once more spent the quiet years in his Lincolnshire village in a uniform devotion of his whole soul to the art of poetry. When the Tennysons were at length obliged to leave Somersby, they moved to High Beech, in Epping Forest; the poet was now attached and "quasi-betrothed" to Emily Sellwood. In 1840 the family moved to Tunbridge Wells, and in 1841 to Boxley, near Maidstone. It was now nearly ten years since Tennyson, greatly discouraged, had broken silence with the public, but in 1842 he consented, after much debate, to publish, in two volumes, his *Poems*, new and old. In this collection appeared for the first time the modern narratives, mostly in blank verse, which he then called "Idylls," such as "The Gardener's Daughter," and "Dora," as well as lyrical and epical studies of a graver kind, such as "Locksley Hall," "Morte d'Arthur," and "Œnone." The book made an instant sensation, and it is from 1842 that the universal fame of Tennyson must be dated. Unfortunately, he needed encouragement, for a speculator had tempted him to sell his little estate, and to invest all his property in a "Patent Decorative Carving Company." In a few months the scheme collapsed and Tennyson was left penniless. The loss affected him so severely that his life was despaired of, and he had to be placed in the charge of a hydropathic physician at Cheltenham, where his peace of mind very gradually returned. In 1845 he was raised from the most grinding poverty by a pension of £200 bestowed by Sir Robert Peel. He was nervously prostrated again in 1847, and underwent treatment at Prestbury. About this time *The Princess* was published, and pleased a wide circle of readers. Tennyson's home was now at Cheltenham. In 1850 *In Memoriam*, on which he had been engaged for many years, was published anonymously, and in June of the same year he married Emily Sellwood at Shiplake. This was a most fortunate union; as Tennyson said long afterwards, "The peace of God came into my life before the altar when I wedded her." Before the year was out he had succeeded Wordsworth as Poet Laureate. The Tennysons settled at Warninglid, on the South Downs, and then at Twickenham. In 1851 they made the tour in Italy, many incidents of which are recorded in "The Daisy." The *Ode on the Death of the*

**Tennyson's Rooms in Corpus Buildings, Cambridge**

*Duke of Wellington* was published in November 1852, and a year later Tennyson bought the house and farm of Farringford, in the Isle of Wight, which he made his home. In 1854 he published *The Charge of the Light Brigade*, and in July 1855 an important volume, *Maud*, containing, beside some pieces already mentioned, "The Brook," and "Will." There was now a sharp reaction against his popularity, and the reception of this admirable book was in part very severe; Tennyson, always unduly sensitive, was much wounded. He withdrew among his ilexes at Farringford, and for some years little was heard of him. In 1859 he reappeared with the first series of the *Idylls of the King*, which achieved a popular success far exceeding anything experienced by Tennyson before, or by any other poet of his time. It was not generally guessed that these first four idylls ("Enid," "Vivien," "Elaine," and "Guinevere") were fragments of an epic on the Fall of the Table Round, which Tennyson was preparing all his life. He now turned his attention to another branch of the same mystical theme, the story of the Holy Grail. In 1862 he was presented to Queen Victoria, whose constant favour he thenceforward enjoyed; on the death of Prince Albert, he dedicated the next edition of the *Idylls of the King* to his memory, "since he held them dear." In 1864 Tennyson published a volume of domestic and modern pieces, under the general title of *Enoch Arden, &c.* In this appeared "Aylmer's Field," and "The Northern Farmer." The years slipped by with scarcely any incidents except the poet's occasional summer journeys on the Continent. He became an object of extreme curiosity, and his privacy at Farringford was more and more recklessly intruded upon by unblushing

**Shiplake Rectory**

**Farringford**

tourists. Perhaps he exaggerated this nuisance, which however became in the process of time absolutely intolerable to him. He determined to go where he could not easily be found, and in 1867 he bought some land on Blackdown, near Haslemere, where he built a house called Aldworth. Several of his smaller works appeared about this time, *The Window*, in 1867, *Lucretius*, in 1868, and *The Holy Grail*, in 1869. These were followed by *Gareth and Lynette* and *The Last Tournament* in 1872, and he supposed the *Idylls of the King* to be complete. He now turned his attention to a branch of literature which had always attracted him, but which he had never before seriously attempted—the drama. His idea was to illustrate the "Making of England" by a series of great historical tragedies. The critics and the public were opposed to Tennyson's dramatic experiments, but he pursued them with a pertinacity which was really extraordinary. *Queen Mary*, the earliest, in 1875, was followed by *Harold* in 1876. In 1879 he reprinted a very early suppressed poem, *The Lover's Tale*, and produced a third play, *The Falcon*. An important volume of *Ballads*, including the incomparable "Rizpah," appeared in 1880.

**Lord Tennyson**

*From a Photograph by Mayall & Co.*

This was followed by two more dramas, *The Cup*, in 1881, and *The Promise of May*, in 1882. In the autumn of 1883 Tennyson went with Gladstone to Copenhagen, and was entertained by the King of Denmark. In 1884 he accepted a peerage, and published the only play of his which has succeeded on the stage, *Becket*. *Tiresias and other Poems*, 1885 (in which "Balin and Balan" completed the *Idylls of the King*); *Locksley Hall Sixty Years After*, 1886; *Demeter and other Poems*, 1889; his seventh play, *The Foresters*, 1892; and the posthumous *Death of Œnone*, 1892, were Tennyson's latest contributions to poetry. His health had recovered, and he entered with a marvellous elasticity of mind and body into old age. His bodily powers failed at last, in his eighty-fourth year, and he passed away, at Aldworth, on the night of the 6th of

October 1892. Six days later he received public burial in Westminster Abbey. Tennyson was a man of unusually tall stature and powerful physique, although liable to suffer from nervous forms of indisposition. He was described when at college as "six feet high, broad-chested, strong-limbed, his face Shakespearian, with deep eyelids, his forehead ample, crowned with dark, wavy hair, his hand the admiration of sculptors." He was extremely short-sighted, yet so keenly observant that he once saw the moonlight reflected in a nightingale's eye, as she sat singing in the hedgerow. Carlyle described Tennyson as "a fine, large-featured, dim-eyed, bronze-coloured, shaggy-headed man, most restful, brotherly, solid-hearted." His voice was "musical, metallic, fit for loud laughter and piercing wail, and all that may lie between."

**Aldworth, Surrey**

FROM "THE LOTOS-EATERS."

The Lotos blooms below the barren peak :
The Lotos blows by every winding creek :
All day the wind breathes low with mellower tone :
Thro' every hollow cave and alley lone
Round and round the spicy downs the yellow Lotus-dust is blown.
We have had enough of action, and of motion we,
Roll'd to starboard, roll'd to larboard, when the surge was seething free,
Where the wallowing monster spouted his foam-fountains in the sea.
Let us swear an oath, and keep it with an equal mind,
In the hollow Lotos-land to live and lie reclined
On the hills like Gods together, careless of mankind.
For they lie beside their nectar, and the bolts are hurl'd
Far below them in the valleys, and the clouds are lightly curl'd
Round their golden houses, girdled with the gleaming world :
Where they smile in secret, looking over wasted lands,
Blight and famine, plague and earthquake, roaring deeps and fiery sands,
Clanging fights, and flaming towns, and sinking ships, and praying hands.
But they smile, they find a music centred in a doleful song
Steaming up, a lamentation and an ancient tale of wrong,
Like a tale of little meaning tho' the words are strong ;
Chanted from an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil,
Storing yearly little dues of wheat and wine and oil ;

Till they perish and they suffer—some, 'tis whisper'd—down in hell
Suffer endless anguish, others in Elysian valleys dwell,
Resting weary limbs at last on beds of asphodel.
Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more.

FROM "MORTE D'ARTHUR."

And slowly answer'd Arthur from the barge:
"The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils himself in many ways,
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?
I have lived my life, and that which I have done
May He within himself make pure! but thou,
If thou shouldst never see my face again,
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep or goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?
For so the whole round earth is every way
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.
But now farewell. I am going a long way
With these thou seëst—if indeed I go—
(For all my mind is clouded with a doubt)
To the island-valley of Avilion;
Where falls not hail, or rain or any snow,
Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
Deep-meadow'd, happy, fair with orchard-lawns
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer sea,
Where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

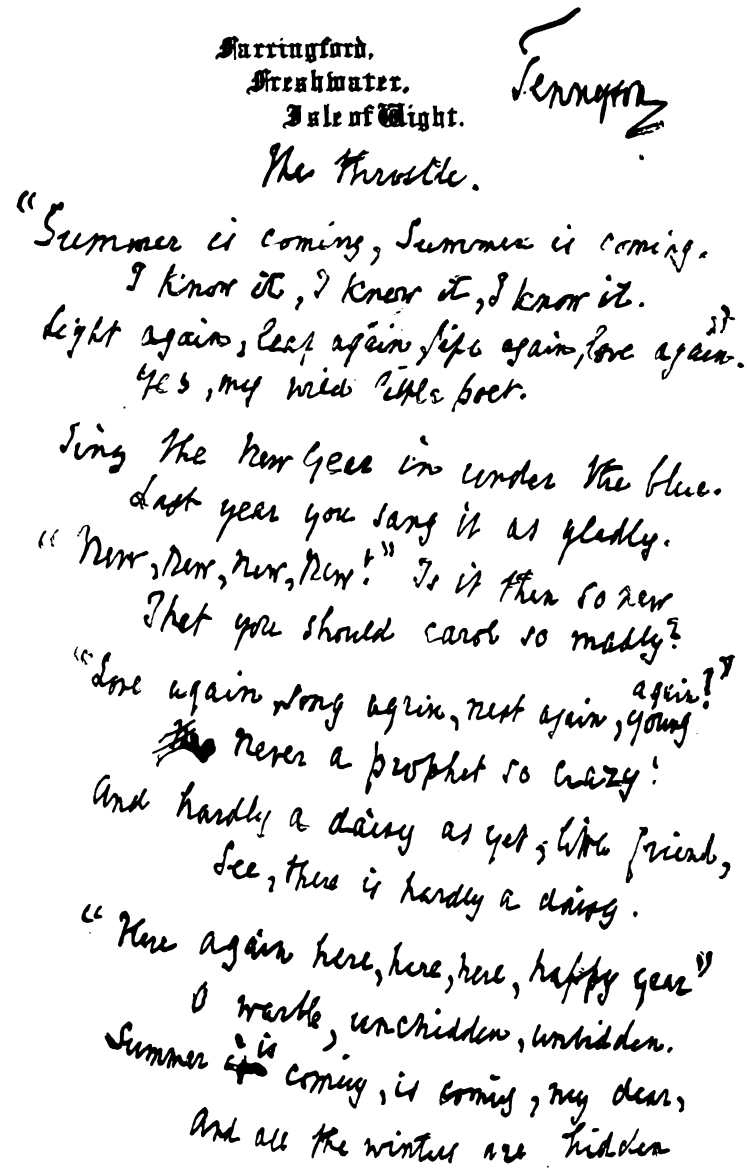
FROM "THE DAISY."

Remember how we came at last
To Como; shower and storm and blast
  Had blown the lake beyond his limit,
And all was flooded; and how we past

From Como, when the light was gray,
And in my head, for half the day,
  The rich Virgilian rustic measure
Of Lari Maxume, all the way,

Like ballad-burthen music, kept,
As on The Lariano crept
  To that fair port below the castle
Of Queen Theodolind, where we slept;

Or hardly slept, but watch'd awake
A cypress in the moonlight shake,
  The moonlight touching o'er a terrace
One tall Agavè above the lake.


Farringford,
Freshwater,
Isle of Wight.

Tennyson

The Throstle.

"Summer is coming, Summer is coming.
I know it, I know it, I know it.
Light again, leaf again, life again, love again."
Yes, my wild little poet.

Sing the new year in under the blue.
Last year you sang it as gladly.
"New, New, New, New!" Is it then so new
That you should carol so madly?

"Love again, song again, nest again, young again!"
Never a prophet so crazy!
And hardly a daisy as yet, little friend,
See, there is hardly a daisy.

"Here again here, here, here, happy year"
O warble, unchidden, unbidden.
Summer is coming, is coming, my dear,
And all the winters are hidden

**MS. of the "Throstle," entirely in Tennyson's handwriting**

TO EDWARD LEAR, ON HIS TRAVELS IN GREECE.

Illyrian woodlands, echoing falls
Of water, sheets of summer glass,
The long divine Peneïan pass,
The vast Akrokeraunian walls,

Tomohrit, Athos, all things fair,
With such a pencil, such a pen,
You shadow forth to distant men,
I read and felt that I was there:

And trust me while I turn'd the page,
And track'd you still on classic ground,
I grew in gladness till I found
My spirits in the golden age.

For me the torrent ever pour'd
And glisten'd—here and there alone
The broad-limb'd Gods at random thrown
By fountain-urns ;—and Naiads oar'd

A glimmering shoulder under gloom
Of cavern pillars ; on the swell
The silver lily heaved and fell ;
And many a slope was rich in bloom

From him, that on the mountain lea
By dancing rivulets fed his flocks,
To him who sat upon the rocks,
And fluted to the morning sea.

### WILL.

O well for him whose will is strong !
He suffers, but he will not suffer long ;
He suffers, but he cannot suffer wrong :
For him nor moves the loud world's random mock,
Nor all Calamity's hugest waves confound,
Who seems a promontory of rock,
That, compass'd round with turbulent sound,
In middle ocean meets the surging shock,
Tempest-buffeted, citadel crown'd.

But ill for him who, bettering not with time,
Corrupts the strength of heaven-descended Will,
And ever weaker grows thro' acted crime,
Or seeming-genial venial fault,
Recurring and suggesting still !
He seems as one whose footsteps halt,
Toiling in immeasurable sand,
And o'er a weary sultry land,
Far beneath a blazing vault,
Sown in a wrinkle of the monstrous hill,
The city sparkles like a grain of salt.

### FROM "MAUD."

Is that enchanted moan only the swell
Of the long waves that roll in yonder bay?
And hark the clock within, the silver knell
Of twelve sweet hours that past in bridal white,
And died to live, long as my pulses play ;
But now by this my love has closed her sight
And given false death her hand, and stol'n away
To dreamful wastes where footless fancies dwell
Among the fragments of the golden day.

May nothing there her maiden grace affright!
Dear heart, I feel with thee the drowsy spell.
My bride to be, my evermore delight,
My own heart's heart, my ownest own, farewell;
It is but for a little space I go,
And ye meanwhile far over moor and fell
Beat to the noiseless music of the night!
Has our whole earth gone nearer to the glow
Of your soft splendours that you look so bright?
*I* have climb'd nearer out of lonely Hell.
Beat, happy stars, timing with things below,
Beat with my heart more blest than heart can tell,
Blest, but for some dark undercurrent woe
That seems to draw—but it shall not be so:
Let all be well, be well.

### From "In Memoriam."

When on my bed the moonlight falls,
I know that in thy place of rest
By that broad water of the west,
There comes a glory on the walls:

Thy marble bright in dark appears,
As slowly steals a silver flame
Along the letters of thy name,
And o'er the number of thy years.

The mystic glory swims away;
From off my bed the moonlight dies;
And closing eaves of wearied eyes
I sleep till dusk is dipt in gray:

And then I know the mist is drawn
A lucid veil from coast to coast,
And in the dark church like a ghost
Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn.

### St. Agnes' Eve.

Deep on the convent roof the snows
Are sparkling to the moon:
My breath to heaven like vapour goes:
May my soul follow soon!
The shadows of the convent-towers
Slant down the snowy sward,
Still creeping with the creeping hours
That lead me to my Lord:
Make Thou my spirit pure and clear
As are the frosty skies,
Or this first snowdrop of the year
That in my bosom lies.

As these white robes are soil'd and dark,
To yonder shining ground:
As this pale taper's earthly spark,
To yonder argent round;

So shows my soul before the Lamb,
My spirit before Thee ;
So in mine earthly house I am,
To that I hope to be.
Break up the heavens, O Lord ! and far,
Thro' all yon starlight keen,
Draw me, Thy bride, a glittering star,
In raiment white and clean.

He lifts me to the golden doors ;
The flashes come and go ;
All heaven bursts her starry floors,
And strows her lights below,
And deepens on and up ! the gates
Roll back, and far within
For me the Heavenly Bridegroom waits,
To make me pure of sin.
The sabbaths of Eternity,
One sabbath deep and wide—
A light upon the shining sea—
The Bridegroom with his bride !

*Mrs. Browning*

ELIZABETH BARRETT, also, pleased a wide and influential circle. Although her work was less pure than Tennyson's, and has proved to be less perennial, there were many readers of deliberate judgment who preferred it to his. Their nerves were pleasurably excited by the choral tumult of Miss Barrett's verse, by her generous and humane enthusiasm, and by the spontaneous impulsiveness of her emotion. They easily forgave the slipshod execution, the hysterical violence, the Pythian vagueness and the Pythian shriek. More critical readers were astonished that one who approached the composition of poetry with an almost religious sense of responsibility, whose whole life was dedicated to the highest aims of verse, who studied with eclectic passion the first classics of every age, should miss the initial charm,

**Elizabeth Barrett Browning**
*After the Portrait by Gordigiani*
*(Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.)*

and should, fresh from Sophocles and Dante, convey her thoughts in a stream which was seldom translucent and never calm. In some of her lyrics, however, and more rarely in her sonnets, she rose to heights of passionate humanity which place her only just below the great poets of her country.

About the year 1850, when, as Mrs. Browning, she was writing at her best, all but a few were to be excused if they considered her the typical *vates*, the inspired poet of human suffering and human aspiration. But her art, from this point onward, declined, and much of her late work was formless, spasmodic, singularly tuneless and harsh, nor is it probable that what seemed her premature death, in 1861, was a serious deprivation to English literature. Mrs. Browning, with great afflatus and vigour, considerable beauty of diction, and not a little capacity of tender felicity of fanciful thought, had the radical fault of mistaking convulsion for strength, and believing that sublimity involved a disordered and fitful frenzy. She was injured by the humanitarian sentimentality which was just coming into vogue, and by a misconception of the uses of language somewhat analogous to that to which Carlyle had resigned himself. She suffered from contortions produced by the fumes of what she oddly called

**Miss Mitford**

*After the Portrait by John Lucas*

> "The lighted altar booming o'er
> The clouds of incense dim and hoar;"

and if "the art of poetry had been a less earnest object to" her, if she had taken it more quietly, she might have done greater justice to her own superb ambition.

**Elizabeth Barrett Barrett** (1806–1861), afterwards **Mrs. Robert Browning,** was the eldest of the eleven children of Edward Moulton-Barrett and Mary Graham-Clarke, his wife; she was born at Coxhoe Hall, the residence of her father's brother,

lovers determined on a secret marriage. On September 12, 1846, Miss Barrett slipped unperceived from the house, and was married to Browning in Marylebone Church; she returned to her home, but on the 19th of the month she escaped, and crossed over to Paris with her husband. This action, so far as Browning was concerned, was long blamed as clandestine; but the exact facts have lately (1899) been made known in detail, and they prove that he acted throughout in strict adhesion to the principles of honour, delicacy, and good sense. For all practical purposes, Elizabeth Barrett, a woman in her forty-first year, was kept in durance by the odious tyranny of her father, and the only way in which her happiness could be secured was to carry her off, like a captive maiden from an ogre's castle. The old man never forgave her, and to his last hour refused to relent; it is difficult to believe that he was perfectly sane, for he behaved in exactly the same way to two other of his daughters. The Brownings, having, as Mrs. Jameson said, "married under circumstances such as to render imprudence the height of prudence," passed on from Paris to Italy, not without great anxiety as to Elizabeth's health. But in happy and free conditions this revived in a wonderful way. They settled in Pisa, where, early in the year 1847, Mrs. Browning showed to her husband the "Sonnets from the Portuguese," which she had written during their engagement; in 1850 these were added to the second edition of her *Poems*. For the greater part of the rest of her life, the Brownings lived at Florence, in the Palazzo Guidi, and here her son and only child was born in March 1849. On the whole, although these years in Italy she was never strong, brought her happiness and comparative health. Her love for her husband was only equalled by his absorbing devotion for her, and the names of no two persons more exquisitely attached to one another are to be met with in the whole history of literature. When Wordsworth died, Mrs. Browning was mentioned for the Laureateship, before it fell to Tennyson. She was now greatly interested in Italian politics, and they tinctured her next publication, the poem of *Casa Guidi Windows*, 1851. So far was the health of Elizabeth at this time recovered, that the couple were able to take a lengthy tour in Europe, even revisiting London. The last ten years of the life of Elizabeth Browning were not eventful; she was more and more absorbed in literature and Italian politics, and in correspond-

**The Sitting-room in Casa Guidi**

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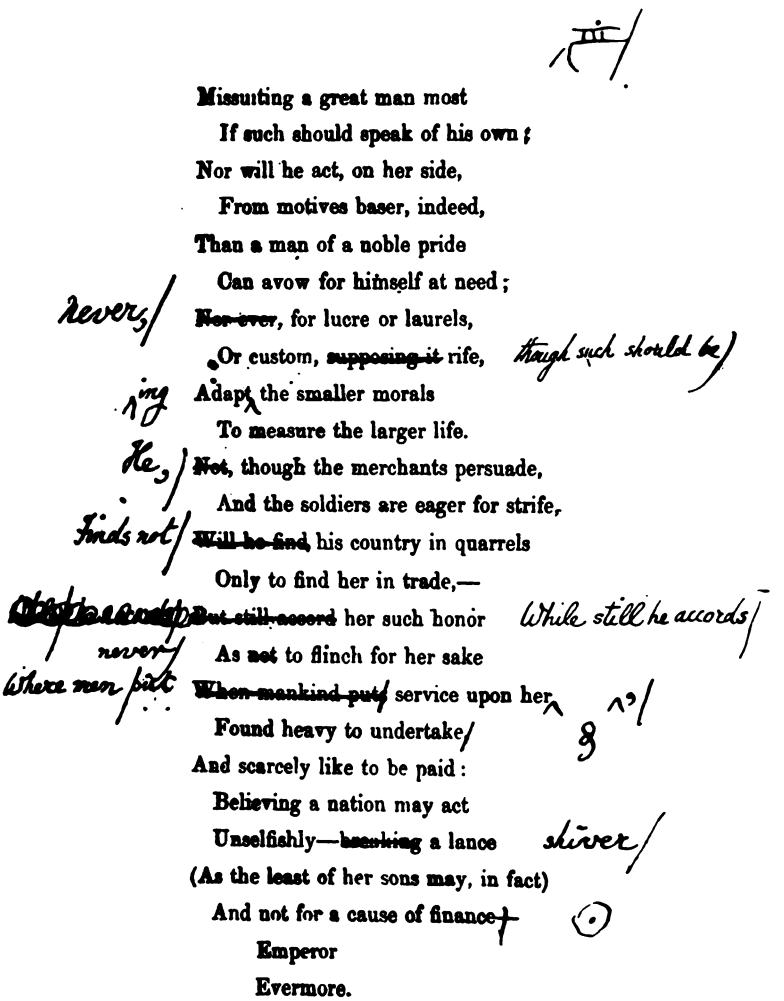
ence with a wide circle of friends. She published *Aurora Leigh* in the winter of 1856, and *Poems before Congress* in 1860. Her *Last Poems*, posthumously published in 1862, contained some of the most admirable of her later lyrics, and among others, "What was he doing, the great God Pan?" In the summer of 1861 she was conscious of increasing weakness, but her actual death, on the 29th of June, at Casa Guidi and in the



Missuiting a great man most
If such should speak of his own;
Nor will he act, on her side,
From motives baser, indeed,
Than a man of a noble pride
Can avow for himself at need;
Never, for lucre or laurels,
Or custom, supposing it rife, though such should be
Adapting the smaller morals
To measure the larger life.
He, not, though the merchants persuade,
And the soldiers are eager for strife,
finds not will he find his country in quarrels
Only to find her in trade,—
But still accord While still he accords her such honor
never As not to flinch for her sake
Where men put When mankind put service upon her,
Found heavy to undertake/
And scarcely like to be paid:
Believing a nation may act
Unselfishly—breaking shiver a lance
(As the least of her sons may, in fact)
And not for a cause of finance.
Emperor
Evermore.

**A page from "Poems before Congress," 1860, with MS. corrections by Mrs. Browning**

arms of her husband, came almost as a surprise. She lies buried at Florence, in a sarcophagus designed by Leighton, "a Lyric Love, half angel and half bird." This famous expression of her husband's refers to the extreme fragility of her form; she was a tiny woman, with a head large in proportion to her body; her copious "blue-black" ringlets fell so as half to conceal the mobile and interesting rather than actually beautiful features, which quivered with sensibility and intelligence. No other woman in England has devoted her life so completely to the cultivation of imaginative literature as did Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

FROM "COWPER'S GRAVE."

It is a place where poets crowned may feel the heart's decaying,—
It is a place where happy saints may weep amid their praying:
Yet let the grief and humbleness, as low as silence, languish!
Earth surely now may give her calm to whom she gave her anguish.

O poets! from a maniac's tongue was poured the deathless singing!
O Christians! at your cross of hope a hopeless hand was clinging!
O men! this man, in brotherhood, your weary paths beguiling,
Groaned inly while he taught you peace, and died while ye were smiling!

And now, what time ye all may read through dimming tears his story,
How discord on the music fell, and darkness on the glory;
And how, when, one by one, sweet sounds and wandering lights departed,
He wore no less a loving face because so broken-hearted:

He shall be strong to sanctify the poet's high vocation,
And bow the meekest Christian down in meeker adoration:
Nor ever shall he be, in praise, by wise or good forsaken;
Named softly, as the household name of one whom God hath taken.

With quiet sadness and no gloom, I learn to think upon him,
With meekness, that is gratefulness to God whose heaven hath won him—
Who suffered once the madness-cloud, to His own love to blind him;
But gently led the blind along where breath and bird could find him;

And wrought within his shattered brain such quick poetic senses,
As hills have language for, and stars, harmonious influences!
The pulse of dew upon the grass, kept his within its number;
And silent shadows from the trees refreshed him like a slumber.

Wild timid hares were drawn from woods to share his home-caresses,
Uplooking to his human eyes with sylvan tendernesses:
The very world, by God's constraint, from falsehood's ways removing,
Its women and its men became, beside him, true and loving.

But while in blindness he remained unconscious of the guiding,
And things provided came without the sweet sense of providing,
He testified this solemn truth, though frenzy desolated—
Nor man, nor nature satisfy, whom only God created!

FROM "THE DEAD PAN."

Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas,
Can ye listen in your silence?
Can your mystic voices tell us
Where ye hide? In floating islands,
With a wind that evermore
Keeps you out of sight of shore?
Pan, Pan is dead.

In what revels are ye sunken
In old Æthiopia?
Have the pygmies made you drunken,
Bathing in mandragora
Your divine pale lips that shiver
Like the lotus in the river?
Pan, Pan is dead.

Do ye sit there still in slumber,
In gigantic Alpine rows?
The black poppies out of number
Nodding, dripping from your brows
To the red lees of your wine,—
And so kept alive and fine?
Pan, Pan is dead.

Or lie crushed your stagnant corses
Where the silver spheres roll on,
Stung to life by centric forces
Thrown like rays out from the sun?—
While the smoke of your old altars
Is the shroud that round you welters?
Great Pan is dead.

"Gods of Hellas, gods of Hellas,"
Said the old Hellenic tongue!
Said the hero-oath, as well as
Poets' songs the sweetest sung!
Have ye grown deaf in a day?
Can ye speak not yea or nay—
Since Pan is dead?

INCLUSIONS.

Oh, wilt thou have my hand, Dear, to lie along in thine?
As a little stone in a running stream, it seems to lie and pine!
Now drop the poor pale hand, Dear, . . . unfit to plight with thine.

Oh, wilt thou have my cheek, Dear, drawn closer to thine own?
My cheek is white, my cheek is worn, by many a tear run down.
Now leave a little space, Dear, . . . lest it should wet thine own.

Oh, must thou have my soul, Dear, commingled with thy soul?—
Red grows the cheek, and warm the hand, . . . the part is in the whole! . . .
Nor hands nor cheeks keep separate, when soul is joined to soul.

HUGH STUART BOYD: LEGACIES.

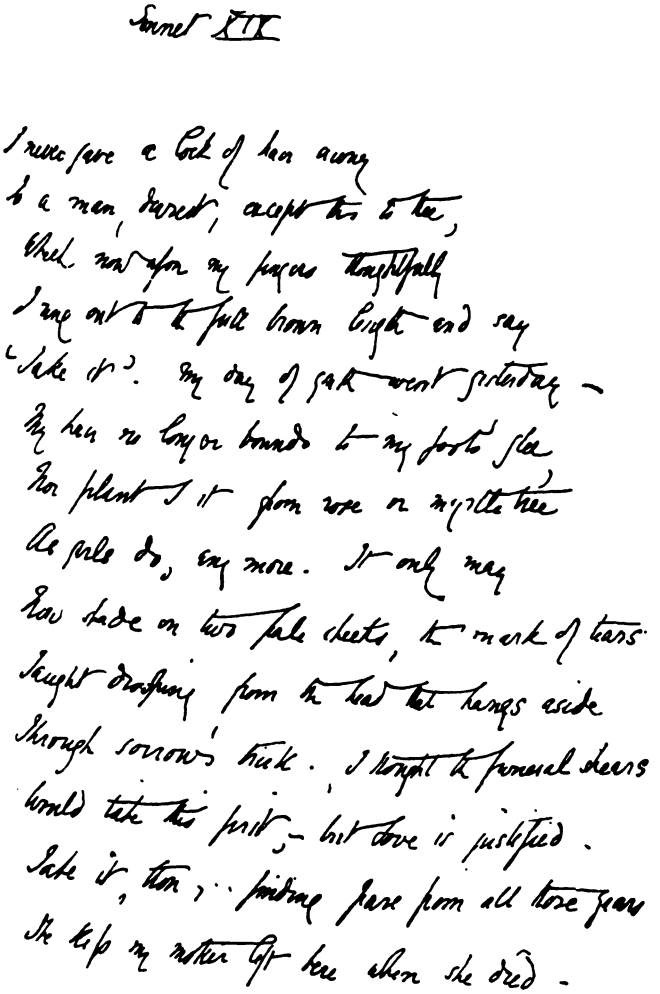
Three gifts the Dying left me: Æschylus,
And Gregory Nazianzen, and a clock
Chiming the gradual hours out like a flock
Of stars, whose motion is melodious.
The books were those I used to read from, thus
Assisting my dear teacher's soul to unlock
The darkness of his eyes! now, mine they mock,
Blinded in turn, by tears: now, murmurous
Sad echoes of my young voice, years agone,
Entoning, from these leaves, the Græcian phrase,
Return and choke my utterance. Books, lie down
In silence of the shelf within my gaze!
And thou, clock, striking the hour's pulses on,
Chime in the day which ends these parting days!

### THE POET AND THE BIRD: A FABLE.

Said a people to a poet—"Go out from among us straightway!
While we are thinking earthly things, thou singest of divine.
There's a little fair brown nightingale, who, sitting in the gateway,
Makes fitter music to our ear, than any song of thine!"

The poet went out weeping—the nightingale ceased chanting;
"Now, wherefore, O thou nightingale, is all thy sweetness done?"
"I cannot sing my earthly things, the heavenly poet wanting,
Whose highest harmony includes the lowest under sun."

The poet went out weeping—and died abroad, bereft there—
The bird flew to his grave and died, amid a thousand wails:—
And, when I last came by the place, I swear the mu ic left there
Was only of the poet's song, and not the nightingale's.



**MS. of Sonnet XIX. from "Sonnets from the Portuguese"**

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FROM "SONNETS FROM THE PORTUGUESE."

I thought once how Theocritus had sung
Of the sweet years, the dear and wished-for years,
Who each one in a gracious hand appears
To bear a gift for mortals, old or young:
And, as I mused it in his antique tongue,
I saw, in gradual vision through my tears,
The sweet, sad years, the melancholy years, . . .
Those of my own life, who by turns had flung
A shadow across me. Straightway I was 'ware,
So weeping, how a mystic Shape did move
Behind me, and drew me backward by the hair;
And a voice said in mastery while I strove, . . .
"Guess now who holds thee?"—"Death!" I said. But, there,
The silver answer rang, . . . "Not Death, but Love."

## THE SLEEP.

"He giveth His beloved sleep."—PSALM cxxvii. 2.

Of all the thoughts of God that are
Born inward unto souls afar,
Along the Psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if that any is,
For gift or grace, surpassing this—
"He giveth His beloved, sleep"?

What would we give to our beloved?—
The hero's heart, to be unmoved,
The poet's star-tuned harp, to sweep,
The patriot's voice, to teach and rouse,
The monarch's crown, to light the brows.—
"He giveth *His* beloved, sleep."

What do we give to our beloved?—
A little faith, all undisproved,
A little dust, to overweep,
And bitter memories, to make
The whole earth blasted for our sake.—
"He giveth *His* beloved, sleep."

"Sleep soft, beloved!" we sometimes say,
But have no tune to charm away
Sad dreams that through the eyelids creep:
But never doleful dream again
Shall break the happy slumber, when
"He giveth *His* beloved, sleep."

O earth, so full of dreary noises!
O men, with wailing in your voices!
O delvèd gold, the wailers heap!
O strife, O curse, that o'er it fall!
God makes a silence through you all,
And "giveth His beloved, sleep."

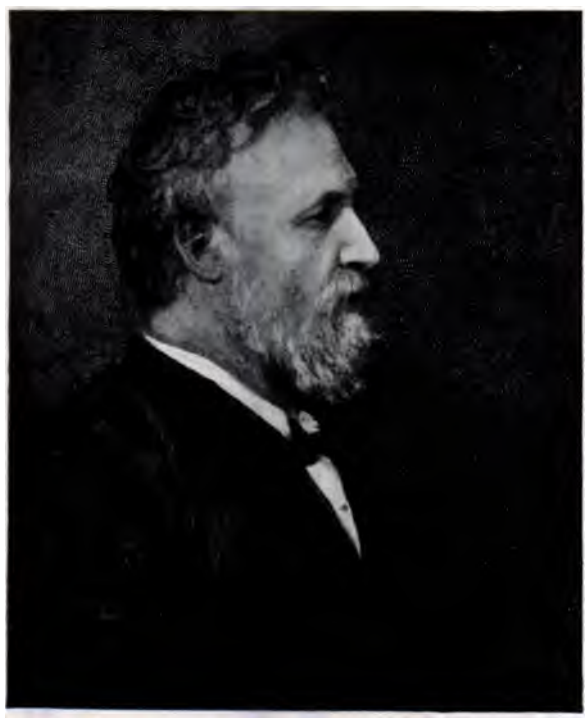
ROBERT BROWNING.

AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY FIELD TALFOURD.

ROBERT BROWNING.
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY FIELD TALFOURD.

his thought, whether the listener can follow him or not: we know that he liked "to dock the smaller parts-o'-speech." In those earlier years of which we speak, he pursued with dignity, but with some disappointment, the rôle of a man moved to sing to others in what they persisted in considering no better than a very exasperating mode of pedestrian speech. So that the pure style in Browning, his exquisite melody when he is melodious, his beauty of diction when he bends to classic forms, the freshness and variety of his pictures—all this was unobserved, or noted only with grudging and inadequate praise.

**Robert Browning** (1812–1889) was the son of Robert Browning, a clerk in the Bank of England, and his wife, whose maiden name was Wiedemann, the daughter of a Hamburg merchant. He was born at Camberwell on the 7th of May 1812. Early in infancy he showed a native force of character, and soon began to make rhymes, at first under the influence of Byron. In 1825, however, he became acquainted with the writings of Shelley and Keats, and abandoned his Byronism. He attended a school at Peckham for some time, but the main part of his education was carried out at home. He went neither to public school nor university (except for a very short time to classes at University College, London), and he declined to adopt any profession, his design from the first being to be a poet and nothing else. His earliest publication, *Pauline*, appeared anonymously in January 1833, but fell still-born from the press. Browning spent the following winter in St. Petersburg, where he wrote "Porphyria's Lover" and "Johannes Agricola." He then proceeded to Italy, and saw Venice and perhaps Asolo for the first time. He returned to London, and in 1835 he published *Paracelsus*, which introduced him to the world of letters. In 1836, at the request of Macready, he wrote his tragedy of *Strafford*, which was printed and produced at Covent Garden Theatre in May 1837, but only ran five nights. He was already writing *Sordello*, which he took with him unfinished when he started for Italy in 18 8; and a great many of his best lyrics belong to this year. *Sordello* was published in 1840, and was received with mockery; as the most tightly-compressed and abstrusely dark of



*Photo]* [*F. Hollyer*

**Robert Browning**

*After the Portrait by G. F. Watts, R.A.*

ROBERT BROWNING.
AFTER THE PORTRAIT BY FIELD TALFOURD.

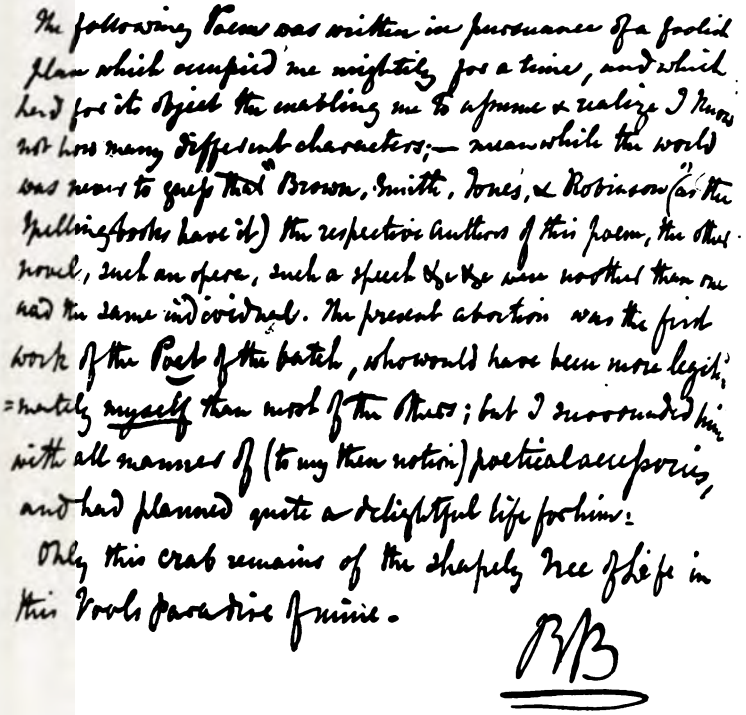
each, *Fifine at the Fair*, *Red Cotton Night-cap Country*, *Aristophanes' Apology*, and *The Inn Album*. Browning now gave himself up for some time to a study of the Greek dramatists, and in 1877 produced, at the suggestion of Carlyle, a grotesque version of the *Agamemnon*. In 1878 he received a great shock in the sudden death of his closest friend, Miss Egerton-Smith. The impression made on him by this event is recorded in *La Saisiaz*. Later in the same year he went to Italy again, for the first time since his wife's death, and for the remainder of his life he visited Italy, and especially the Veneto, as often and for as long a time as possible. He was now universally famous at last, and for the closing ten years of his career he

*Rischgitz*] [*Collection*

**The Palazzo Rezzonico, Venice, where Browning died, December 12, 1889**

lived in the consciousness of having become within his lifetime a classic, beloved and discussed. He continued to write and to publish volumes of poems with considerable regularity. Of these last fruits of his genius, *Jocoseria* (1883) and *Ferishtah's Fancies* (1884) were particularly characteristic. In these years he spent a great part of each year in Venice, and in 1887 he purchased the Palazzo Rezzonico in that city, intending to make it his residence. It was there that he died, after a brief illness, on the 12th of December 1889, his last volume of poems, *Asolando*, being published in London on the same day. Four days later the body was brought to London, after a stately public funeral in Venice, and was buried on the 31st of December in Westminster Abbey. In physique Robert Browning was short and thick-set, of a very muscular build; his temper was ardent and optimistic; he was appreciative, sympathetic, and full of curiosity; prudent in affairs, and rather "close" about money; robust, active, loud of

speech, cordial in manner, gracious and conciliatory in address, but subject to sudden fits of indignation which were like thunderstorms. In his long periods of foreign residence, he had acquired something of the mode and gesture of a Northern Italian.



MS. Note of Browning's on the Fly-leaf of "Pauline"

FROM "A TOCCATA OF GALUPPI'S."

Well (and it was graceful of them) they'd break talk off and afford
—She, to bite her mask's black velvet, he to finger on his sword,
While you sat and played Toccatas, stately at the clavichord?

What? Those lesser thirds so plaintive, sixths diminished sigh on sigh,
Told them something? Those suspensions, those solutions—"Must we die?"
Those commiserating sevenths—"Life might last! we can but try!"

"Were you happy?"—"Yes."—"And are you still as happy?"—"Yes—and you?"
—"Then more kisses"—"Did *I* stop them, when a million seemed so few?"
Hark—the dominant's persistence, till it must be answered to!

So an octave struck the answer. Oh, they praised you, I dare say!
"Brave Galuppi! that was music! good alike at grave and gay!
I can always leave off talking, when I hear a master play."

Then they left you for their pleasure: till in due time, one by one,
Some with lives that came to nothing, some with deeds as well undone,
Death stepped tacitly and took them where they never see the sun.

But when I sit down to reason—think to take my stand nor swerve
Till I triumph o'er a secret wrung from nature's close reserve,
In you come with your cold music, till I creep thro' every nerve.

Yes, you, like a ghostly cricket, creaking where a house was burned—
"Dust and ashes, dead and done with, Venice spent what Venice earned!
The soul, doubtless, is immortal—where a soul can be discerned.

"Yours for instance, you know physics, something of geology,
Mathematics are your pastime; souls shall rise in their degree;
Butterflies may dread extinction—you'll not die, it cannot be!

"As for Venice and its people, merely born to bloom and drop,
Here on earth they bore their fruitage, mirth and folly were the crop.
What of soul was left, I wonder, when the kissing had to stop?

"Dust and ashes!" So you creak it, and I want the heart to scold.
Dear dead women, with such hair, too—what's become of all the gold
Used to hang and brush their bosoms? I feel chilly and grown old.

**Browning's Study in De Vere Gardens**

*From a Drawing by F. Moscheles*

*(Reproduced by permission of Messrs. Smith, Elder & Co.)*

FROM "SORDELLO."

Lo, on a heathy brown and nameless hill
By sparkling Asolo, in mist and chill,
Morning just up, higher and higher runs
A child barefoot and rosy—See! the sun's
On the square castle's inner-court's green wall
—Like the chine of some extinct animal
Half-turned to earth and flowers; and thro' the haze
(Save where some slender patches of grey maize
Are to be overleaped) that boy has crost
The whole hillside of dew and powder-frost
Matting the balm and mountain camomile:
Up and up goes he, singing all the while

Some unintelligible words to beat
The lark, God's poet, swooning at his feet,
So worsted is he at "the few fine locks
Stained like pale honey oozed from topmost rocks
Sun-blanched the livelong summer."—All that's left
Of the Goito lay! And thus bereft,
Sleep and forget, Sordello . . . in effect
He sleeps, the feverish poet—I suspect
Not utterly companionless; but, friends,
Wake up; the ghost's gone, and the story ends
I'd fain hope, sweetly—seeing, peri or ghoul,
That spirits are conjectured fair or foul,
Evil or good, judicious authors think
According as they vanish in a stink
Or in a perfume: friends be frank; ye snuff
Civet, I warrant: really? Like enough—
Merely the savour's rareness—any nose
May ravage with impunity a rose—
Rifle a musk-pot and 'twill ache like yours:
I'd tell you that same pungency ensures
An after-gust, but that were overbold:
Who would has heard Sordello's story told.

I am no trumpet but a reed—
No flattering breath shall from me lead
A silver sound, a hollow sound:
I will not sing for priest or king,
One blast but in re-echoing,
Would leave a bondsman faster bound.

Elizabeth Barrett Browning.

Oh, emptiness of fame!
Oh, Persic Zoroaster, Lord of Stars!
Who said these old renowns, dead long ago,
Could make me overlook the living world
To gaze thro' glooms at where they stood, indeed,
But stand no longer?—What a warm, light life
After the shade!

Robert Browning.

MS. Verses by Robert Browning and E. B. Browning

Sunday Evening.

When I come back from seeing you, and think over it all, there never is a least word of yours I could not occupy myself with, and wish to return to you with a some-how to say, all. The thoughts & fancies it is vain to call out of me:— There is nothing in you that does not draw out all of me:— you perfect me, dearest, and there is no help for the overpraising it all, no voice nor hand, but those of mine which shrink and turn away from the attempt:— so you must go on, patiently, knowing me, and your entire power more and more, on me, and I will console myself, in the full content, with your knowledge, perception, intuition, somehow I must believe you can get to what is here, in me, without the pretence of my telling or writing it. But because I give up the great achievements, there is no reason I should not weave any occasion of making clear one of the little important points that arise in our inter-course: if I fancy I can deal with the least success, for instance, it is on my mind to explain what I meant yesterday by trusting that the entire happiness I feel in the letters, and the help in the criticisms might not be

Facsimile Letter from Robert Browning to Elizabeth Barrett.

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beset by the enemies, even, that those labours in which you were born, might be suspended, and being absent, this much generosity to me = dearest I believed in your glorious genius and knew it for a true star from the moment I saw it; long before I had the blessing of knowing it was my star, with my fortune and futurity in it - and when I draw back from myself and look better and more clearly then I do feel with you, that the writing a few letters more or less, reading many or few rhymes of another person, would not interfere in any material degree with that power of yours - that you might easily make one so happy and yet go on writing "Geraldines" and "Letters" - but .. how can I, dearest, leave my heart's treasures long, even to look at your genius ?.. and when I come back and find all safe, find the comfort of you, the traces of you in work it do - like me - to treat all that as a light effort, an easy matter ?

Yet, if you can, left me with one hand, while the other supplies to crown you. There is enough left on that, too!

Such, I have spoken. As I told you, your hour a comes now: how have you determined respecting the known = Venetian ?. you like me nothing of yourself ! It is all me you

help me you do good to me such I take it ah? how one of this goes on! I have not had every hope (inquiry) shown find out .. where is the proper, rational ally to be expected "lovers' quarrel?" Here, as you will find! "I see an antic" .. I am no more "at close with my grace" than Peter Stuyvesant about them they are to be "eerste gratis among" - and to get back into a thing, one must needs get for a moment out of it .. trust me, no! And now the natural inference from all this? The consistent inference .. the "self denying ordinance"? why, do you doubt? - even this, - you must just put aside the Romance, and take the americans in word, and make my heart start up when the letter is laid to it, the letter full of your news, telling me you are well and walking, and working for my sake towards Rest (mind) - informing me moreover, if Thursday or Friday is to be my day -

May God help you, my own love -

I will certainly bring you an act of the Play .. for this urgent reason, in addition to the others .. that I may talk to you that I can talk you now more than ever lately!

Ever your own

POSTAGE
6
QUEEN HENN
B
Miss Barrett,
50 Wimpole St.
LONDON
1861

### Misconceptions.

This is a spray the Bird clung to,
  Making it blossom with pleasure,
Ere the high tree-top she sprung to,
  Fit for her nest and her treasure.
  Oh, what a hope beyond measure
Was the poor spray's, which the flying feet hung to—
So to be singled out, built in, and sung to!

This is a heart the Queen leant on,
  Thrilled in a minute erratic,
Ere the true bosom she bent on,
  Meet for love's regal dalmatic.
  Oh, what a fancy ecstatic
Was the poor heart's, ere the wanderer went on—
Love to be saved for it, proffered to, spent on!

### Home Thoughts from Abroad.

Oh, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brush-wood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows—
Hark! where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over,
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower,
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

### From "One Word More" (1855).

Love, you saw me gather men and women,
Live or dead or fashioned by my fancy,
Enter each and all, and use their service,
Speak from every mouth—the speech, a poem.
Hardly shall I tell my joys and sorrows,
Hopes and fears, belief and disbelieving:
I am mine and yours—the rest be all men's,
Karshook, Cleon, Norbert and the fifty.
Let me speak this once in my true person,
Not as Lippo, Roland or Andrea,
Though the fruit of speech be just this sentence—
Pray you, look on these my men and women,
Take and keep my fifty poems finished;
Where my heart lies, let my brain lie also!
Poor the speech; be how I speak, for all things.

Not but that you know me! Lo, the moon's self!
Here in London, yonder late in Florence,
Still we find her face, the thrice-transfigured.
Curving on a sky imbrued with colour,
Drifted over Fiesole by twilight,
Came she, our new crescent of a hair's-breadth.
Full she flared it, lamping Samminiato,
Rounder 'twixt the cypresses and rounder,
Perfect till the nightingales applauded.
Now, a piece of her old self, impoverished,
Hard to greet, she traverses the house-roofs,
Hurries with unhandsome thrift of silver,
Goes dispiritedly—glad to finish.

### The Lost Mistress.

All's over, then—does truth sound bitter
As one at first believes?
Hark, 'tis the sparrows' good-night twitter
About your cottage eaves!

And the leaf-buds on the vine are woolly,
I noticed that, to-day;
One day more bursts them open fully
—You know the red turns grey.

To-morrow we meet the same then, dearest?
May I take your hand in mine?
Mere friends are we,—well, friends the merest
Keep much that I resign:

For each glance of the eye so bright and black,
Though I keep with heart's endeavour,—
Your voice, when you wish the snowdrops back,
Though it stays in my soul for ever!—

—Yet I will but say what mere friends say,
Or only a thought stronger;
I will hold your hand but as long as all may,
Or so very little longer!

### Another Way of Love.

June was not over,
Though past the full,
And the best of her roses
Had yet to blow,
When a man I know
(But shall not discover,
Since ears are dull,
And time discloses)
Turned him and said with a man's true air,
Half sighing a smile in a yawn, as 'twere,—
"If I tire of your June, will she greatly care?"

Well, Dear, indoors with you!
True, serene deadness
Tries a man's temper.
What's in the blossom
June wears on her bosom?
Can it clear scores with you?
Sweetness and redness,
*Eadem semper!*
Go, let me care for it greatly or slightly!
If June mends her bowers now, your hand left unsightly
By plucking their roses—my June will do rightly.

And after, for pastime,
If June be refulgent
With flowers in completeness,
All petals, no prickles,
Delicious as trickles
Of wine poured at mass-time—
And choose One indulgent
To redness and sweetness:
Or if, with experience of man and of spider,
She use my June-lightning, the strong insect-ridder,
To stop the fresh spinning—why, June will consider.

*Reason and Enthusiasm*

While these great writers were waiting patiently for the public to turn to them, there occurred in our poetical literature a struggle between the sedative and the enthusiastic temperament which has left a certain mark on its history. The influence of Wordsworth and Southey in their old age was towards the encouragement of good sense and "the equipoise of reason" against an extravagant Byronism. During the reign of William IV., passion and enthusiasm were greatly out of mode, and the school of poetic utility found a successful leader in HENRY TAYLOR, who strenuously advocated the supremacy of reason over imagination and irregularity. From 1834, when the famous preface to his drama of *Philip van Artevelde* appeared, the doctrines of Taylor were almost paramount, until in 1839 PHILIP JAMES BAILEY published his apocalyptic drama of *Festus*, founded not on Byron, however, but on Goethe, in which a direct counterblast was blown, and the liberty of imaginative speculation proclaimed as from a trumpet. This counteraction, at a very dead moment of our poetical existence, claims a record in the briefest outline of the national literature.

*Photo* [*Morrison, Nottingham*

**Philip James Bailey**